NATION

SC: Bail plea delays affect citizens' fundamental rights

≫ Page: 4 ≪

BUSINESS

FPIs sold equities worth ₹19,994 crore in November

≫ Page: 7 ≪

SPORTS

Advani wins record 28th billiards title

≫ Page: 8 ≪

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DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

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Canada ends fast-track visas, Indians hit

Indian students suffer big blow as visa approval will now take 8 weeks instead of 20 days

OTTAWA, 9 NOV

Canada has ended with immediate effect the popular fast track study visa programme, SDS, a major policy decision that is likely to impact scores of international students, including from India.

The processing time for students applying under the Student Direct Stream (SDS) was significantly shorter and approval rates higher, something that will change after Canada ended the scheme on Friday.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in September had announced on X: "We're granting 35 per cent fewer international student permits this year. And next year, that number's going down by another 10 per cent."

The move comes amid the ongoing diplomatic row between India and Canada.

According to the Indian High Commission here, India is the largest source country of foreign students with an estimated 4,27,000 Indian students studying in Canada.

PHOTO: FREEPIK

Launched in 2018, the SDS by the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) aimed to simplify the visa application process for students from 14 countries, including India, China, and the Philippines, who met specific requirements. These requirements included a Canadian Guaranteed Investment Certificate (GIC) worth $20,635 CAD and English or French language test scores.

The streamlined process allowed successful applicants to secure study permits 20 days, while processing times under the standard route often extend to around eight weeks for Indian applicants. IRCC gave a cut off time of 12 am IST Saturday, and said all the eligible SDS applications received before it will be processed under these streams.

However, IRCC said the prospective students can still apply through the regular study permit stream, for which Guaranteed Investment Certificates are accepted as proof of financial support.

Further tightening measures include tougher language and academic benchmarks for students aiming to qualify for the Post-Graduation Work Permit (PGWP), limited work permits for spouses of international students, and higher financial proof requirements. The changes come as Canada seeks to balance the benefits of its international education sector—hosting a record 8,07,000 study permit holders in 2023—with the need to alleviate pressures on housing and services. On 24 October, Immigration Minister Marc Miller outlined the latest immigration strategy saying Canada will admit approximately 3,95,000 permanent residents in 2025, marking a drop of nearly 20 per cent from the 4,85,000 expected this year. *—PTI*

'Not all Sikhs in Canada are Khalistan supporters'

OTTAWA, 9 NOV

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has acknowledged the presence of Khalistan supporters in Canada but said they do not represent the Sikh community as a whole.

His comments came during Deepavali celebrations at Ottawa's Parliament Hill recently amid an ongoing diplomatic row with India over the killing of Khalistan extremist Hardeep Singh Nijjar.

The relations between the two countries came under severe strain following Trudeau's allegations in September last year of a "potential" involvement of Indian agents in Nijjar's killing. Days after an attack on Hindus at a Brampton temple, Canadian MP Chandra Arya has come down heavily on politicians pitting Hindus and Sikhs on "opposing sides" and asserted that the Hindu-Canadians and the Sikhs are on one side and the Khalistanis on the other. *—PTI*

"There are many supporters of Khalistan in Canada, but they do not represent the Sikh Community as a whole. Similarly, there are supporters of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government in Canada, but they do not represent all Hindu Canadians

—Justin Trudeau, Canadian PM

'Centre to soon give ₹100cr credit scheme for MSMEs'

BENGALURU, 9 NOV

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced that the Rs 100 crore credit guarantee scheme for MSMEs, introduced in this year's budget, will soon be submitted to the Union Cabinet for approval. Speaking at the National MSME Cluster Outreach Programme, she highlighted five budget announcements aimed at supporting MSMEs. She emphasized that this special credit guarantee corpus would be crucial for MSMEs during challenging times. Sitharaman explained that once approved by the cabinet, the scheme will be rolled out by the MSME ministry and banks.

Woman gunned down by militants in Manipur

IMPHAL, 9 NOV

A woman working in the paddy fields was gunned down by suspected hills-based militants in Manipur's Bishnupur district on Saturday, officials said. The incident took place in Saiton area when the woman, along with other farmers, went to tend to the crops when militants opened fire from hill-based positions on the low-lying farmlands in Imphal Valley. The woman died on the spot, the officials said, adding the incident sparked tension in the village with the locals alleging that the central forces deployed in the area were not taking action to thwart such attacks. *—PTI*

Charmadi Ghat to be widened at ₹343 crore: MP

MANGALURU, 9 NOV

Dakshina Kannada MP Capt. Brijesh Chowta announced on Saturday that the Charmadi Ghat section of National Highway-73 will soon undergo major expansion work. The vital 11-kilometre stretch through Karnataka's Western Ghats will be widened to two lanes with a central allocation of Rs 343.74 crore. Speaking to PTI, Capt. Chowta stated that the project would improve connectivity between Mangaluru, Mudigere, and Tumakuru. The tender process has already been completed, with construction expected to start soon. This development aims to ease travel for passengers from Karnataka's coastal regions. *—PTI*

Covid 'scam': Panel recommends BSY's prosecution

BENGALURU, 9 NOV

Justice Michael D' Cunha Commission of Inquiry that investigated alleged irregularities in purchasing equipment and medicines during Covid-19 pandemic has recommended prosecuting then chief minister BS Yediyurappa and former minister B Sriramulu, Karnataka Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao said on Saturday.

It is clear that there was a "loot" in the purchase of equipment and medicines during Covid-19, when the BJP was in power, Rao said. "There had been lapses. No one could question them during the pandemic. Making use of that situation, the government of the day looted and took decisions convenient for them, in violation of the rules. As an Opposition party then, we (Congress) tried to highlight the issue. After coming to power in the State, we constituted a commission of inquiry headed by a former judge to probe and submit a report," Rao said here. The commission has submitted its preliminary report and the second report might be submitted in six-seven months, he added.

BS Yediyurappa *PHOTO: PTI*

B Sriramulu *PHOTO: PTI*

"The Cabinet sub-committee formed has discussed the report, and it is true that Yediyurappa and Sriramulu have been directly named... about Rs 14 crore loss has happened in procurement of PPE kits. It was procured in violation of rules at a higher price. Despite their availability in the country, they were procured from China, Hong Kong," Rao said.

He advised Yediyurappa and Sriramulu to stay away from the 13 November Assembly bypoll campaigning. He also said during the course of the investigation, charges may come out against the person who took succeeded Sriramulu, indicating current MP K Sudhakar. *—PTI*

SALAR EXCLUSIVE

Channapatna gears up for DK vs Gowda battle

CHANNAPATNA, 9 NOV

It's a battle royale being fought in the toy town of Channapatna between the ruling Congress party's Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar and former prime minister HD Deve Gowda's family. However, the electoral battle does not seem to be confined to just the two families– the Gowdas and the DK brothers (Shivakumar and former MP DK Suresh). Congress candidate CP Yogeeshwara, who won from Channapatna five times and lost twice also has an axe to grind with the Gowda family as his electoral defeats have been restricted to the times when he contested against Deve Gowda's son and Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy from the constituency.

Propped up as a Congress candidate after he resigned from the membership of the Legislative Council membership and quit BJP, Yogeeshwara's "ghar wapsi" to Congress, his first political party, voters of Channapatna are being treated to a slanging match between Kumaraswamy vs Shivakumar.—*Salar News*

>>>More on Page 2

Falsehoods won't change truth: India to Pak at UN

UNITED NATIONS, 9 NOV

- India is among the largest troop-contributing countries to UN peacekeeping missions.

In a strong retort, India slammed Pakistan for peddling 'falsehood' after it referred to Jammu and Kashmir during a debate on peacekeeping operations in the UN.

"India chooses its right to reply in response to the comments made by Pakistan that has yet again made an attempt to divert this august body from its agenda," Member of the Rajya Sabha and National Spokesperson of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Sudhanshu Trivedi said.

His remarks came during a debate on peacekeeping operations at the Special Political and Decolonisation (Fourth Committee) of the UN General Assembly here Friday.

Trivedi asserted that the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir "was, is and will remain an integral part of India. Trivedi delivered India's strong response after the Pakistani delegate spoke about the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP), mandated to supervise the ceasefire along the Line of Control.

India maintains that UNMOGIP has outlived its utility and is irrelevant after the Simla Agreement and the consequent establishment of the Line of Control. He added that this could have been "possible because of firm foreign policies" of Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government for a "strong and assertive India on the international stage." *—PTI*

RAPE-ACCUSED PRAJWAL MOVES SC SEEKING BAIL

BENGALURU, 9 NOV

Former Hassan MP Prajwal Revanna approached Supreme Court on Saturday after the High Court denied him bail in two rape cases and a separate charge of recording a video of sexual harassment. Supreme Court is set to hear his petition on Monday.

On 21 October, High Court rejected Prajwal's bail application, with Justice M Nagaprasanna observing that the charges against him, if proven, reflected "wanton lust and depravity" and had a "chilling effect on society."

Prajwal, the grandson of former prime minister HD Deve Gowda, is also facing a third rape case. The charges against him emerged in April, when multiple women accused the former MP of coercing them into sexual acts, which were allegedly recorded on video without their consent. *—PTI*

MURDERS IN NAMMA CITY

Woman found dead in City house

BENGALURU, 9 NOV

A 44-year-old woman, who was running a small chit fund business, was found dead inside her house in Bommanahalli on Saturday. Police suspect that Jayamma was assaulted and strangled to death by two or three assailants who had barged into her house. Police have found injury marks on the woman's face. No valuables were stolen from the house, a senior officer told **Salar News**. Jayamma from Tamil Nadu was staying at a rented house near Hongasandra bus stop. The woman had separated from her husband over 20 years ago and is survived by two sons. One of the sons is a bus driver while another resided separately and rarely visited his mother, Bommanahalli police said. The body was discovered by the house owner who found the door of the house open and decided to check, police said. *—Salar News*

2 bus cleaners found dead in shed

BENGALURU, 9 NOV

Two cleaners of a private bus were found dead inside a shed in Singanahalli here on Saturday morning.

The deceased are Nagesh and Manjegowda and they engaged in a violent fight after being heavily intoxicated on Friday night, Bagalur police said. It is suspected that they killed each other following a scuffle. However the exact reason is still not known. Further investigation is on, police said. *—Salar News*

2 TEACHERS ARRESTED

NEET pupil held hostage, raped for 6 months

KANPUR, 9 NOV

A minor student from Fatehpur who moved to prepare for her medical entrance exam NEET at a prominent coaching institute was allegedly held hostage for over six months and raped by two of its teachers, police said on Saturday.

They said the ordeal began for the student in December 2022, when she was putting up at a city hostel. Assistant Commissioner of Police (Kalyanpur) Abhishek Pandey said the case was registered on Friday after she approached the Kalyanpur police station.

Both teachers -- Sahil Siddiqui, who taught biology, and Vikas Porwal, who taught chemistry -- have been arrested and charged with offences of rape, wrongful confinement, criminal intimidation and under provisions of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO) Act. The student was 17 years old when this happened.

PHOTO: X/@KANPURNAGARPOL

In her complaint, the survivor told police that in December 2022, Siddiqui invited her to his friend's flat in Kalyanpur's Makdi-Khera area for a New Year's party, saying other students would be there as well.

She alleged that when she reached the flat, she found only Siddiqui there who drugged her by lacing her soft drink with sedatives and raped her while also recording the episode on video.

According to the complaint, Siddiqui allegedly held her hostage in his flat for over six months, during which he repeatedly raped her and also threatened to share the video online if she spoke to anyone about it. *—PTI*

Reliance loses $50B in mkt capitalisation since July

NEW DELHI, 9 NOV

Reliance Industries Ltd. has seen a nearly $50 billion drop in market capitalisation since its peak in July, as the company faces weakening earnings and the impact of an economic slowdown.

Led by billionaire Mukesh Ambani, the conglomerate, which spans sectors from refining to retail, has struggled to outperform the broader Indian market. Its shares have barely risen this year, trailing the NSE Nifty 50 Index by the widest margin in nearly a decade.

Despite broader market challenges, including a foreign sell-off and concerns over earnings growth, Indian stocks have still performed well compared to other major Asian markets in 2024.

The sharp decline in Reliance's stock price is largely attributed to disappointing quarterly results, with the company missing earnings estimates for the sixth consecutive quarter. A slowdown in demand for its key oils-to-chemicals business has weighed heavily on performance.

In August, during its annual shareholders' meeting, Reliance announced a one-for-one free share offer to investors but offered no updates on the much-anticipated listings of its telecom and retail units. *—Salar News with Agencies*

ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL

CHANNAPATNA WITNESSES BATTLE ROYALE

Yogeeshwara is your palanquin carrier & pall-bearer: DKS | Tears are our family inheritance: HDD

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar campaigns for Congress candidate CP Yogeeshwara in Channapatna *PHOTO: SALAR*

Former prime minister HD Deve Gowda campaigns for NDA candidate Nikhil Kumaraswamy in Channapatna *PHOTO: SALAR*

NAHEED ATAULLA
CHANNAPATNA, 9 NOV

It's a battle royale being fought in the toy town of Channapatna between the ruling Congress party's Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar and former prime minister HD Deve Gowda's family. However, the electoral battle does not seem to be confined to just the two families– the Gowdas and the DK brothers (Shivakumar and former MP DK Suresh). Congress candidate CP Yogeeshwara, who won from Channapatna five times and lost twice also has an axe to grind with the Gowda family as his electoral defeats have been restricted to the times when he contested against Deve Gowda's son and Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy from the constituency, except on one occasion when he defeated the latter's wife Anitha Kumaraswamy in 2013.

Propped up as a Congress candidate after he resigned from the membership of the Legislative Council membership and quit BJP, Yogeeshwara's "ghar wapsi" to the Congress, his first political party, voters of Channapatna are being treated to a slanging match between Kumaraswamy vs Shivakumar and Yogeeshwara. The NDA (JD(S) and BJP combine) candidate Nikhil Kumaraswamy is facing the bypoll with the baggage of two electoral defeats in the Mandya Lok Sabha Constituency in 2019 and Ramanagaram Assembly Seat in 2023, fighting to rid himself of the tag of a 'doomed politician'.

A veteran of nine electoral battles, Yogeeshwara is banking on the developmental works he had taken up in the constituency as an MLA and dives straight into his campaign by attacking the Gowda family. "I have indeed changed parties, but in the last six and half years, Kumaraswamy has not contributed to the constituency."

SALAR EXCLUSIVE

Admitting that this bypoll is not a cake-walk for him Yogeeshwara, addressing a meeting in Honnanayakanahalli and Makkali, he has become wary of elections. "We are like the proverbial Tenali Rama cat, which would not touch milk after being burned by hot milk."

The way this constituency has been ruined by Kumaraswamy when he was the MLA, makes me wonder what will happen if his son gets elected?, he asks.

Ridiculing Kumaraswamy for resigning from the Channapatna Assembly seat after winning the 2023 polls and opting for a role at the Centre, Yogeeshwara accuses Kumaraswamy of wanting to bequeath the constituency to his son like an heirloom. "Kumaraswamy is like the crane, which keeps changing lakes in search of new fish," he maintains.

Joining Yogeeshwara on the dais after earlier meetings in the constituency, KPCC President and Deputy Chief Minister Shivakumar is rather blunt in seeking votes for Congress. "Why would Nikhil lose the Mandya Lok Sabha seat, when his father was the chief minister and mother was MLA from adjoining Ramanagara constituency unless the people recognised his incompetence" he asks.

Dismissing the Gowda family's claim that they belong to the constituency, Shivakumar tells the people, "Yogeeshwara was born here and will be here for all times to come. Take money from other parties, but vote for the Congress. Yogeeshwara will always be there to carry you in a palanquin and also be your pall-bearer," he adds.

Meanwhile, Devarahipparagi (Vijayapura) JD(S) MLA Bhimanagouda Patil, who has been campaigning for Nikhil says his party's alliance with BJP will not impact the minority votes in the constituency, which is the deciding factor for the candidate's victory. Apart from the alliance partners campaigning and setting up election offices independently for Nikhil, in some places, they have also opened offices in the name of NDA.

Addressing meetings in Singarajipura, Boohalli and Channapatna, Deve Gowda, who is actively campaigning for his grandson, chided the Congress leaders for making light of his son and grandson becoming emotional during their speeches. "Congress would do well to remember that tears are an inheritance in our family. Have you ever seen Shivakumar shed a tear for the people? He (Shivakumar) started with just Rs 100 as an understudy with underworld don Kotwal Ramachandra. When a farmer who feeds the nation is in pain, a compassionate heart is moved," Gowda states.

It may be recalled that Kumaraswamy in a speech in Samandipur village became emotional saying this village is the ancestral home of his daughter-in-law Revathi's grandmother, and since his son Nikhil's wedding had taken place during the pandemic he had not been able to invite the people of this village to the wedding fest. This had invited ridicule from Congress leaders. *—Salar News*

I am fighting against the Gowda dynasty: Yogeeshwara

CHANNAPATNA, 9 NOV

Dubbed as a party-hopper or "jumping star", actor turned politician CP Yogeeshwara, has no qualms over having switched political parties to contest elections from Channapatna in Ramanagara district in the past. The present bypoll being a do-or-die battle for him, the 61-year-old veteran politician in a quick chat with Salar News said Congress is going to be the last stop in his political career.

Q: You have contested several elections from Channapatna, is this an easy or tough contest for you?

A: So far, I have contested nine elections and this is my tenth. I won five times, this is not a tough election, but not an easy one either. My opponent Nikhil Kumaraswamy hails from a dynasty represented by former prime minister HD Deve Gowda and former chief minister HD Kumaraswamy. He has that legacy, which I am fighting against.

Q: Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar has been saying that he is the actual candidate and whoever is contesting on the Congress symbol is just his ₹nominee'?

A: Definitely, I am his nominee. Shivakumar's backing has helped me in fighting this bypoll.

Q: You have been switching parties and this time you have come back from BJP to Congress...

A: The political scenario was very different from what it is now when I switched parties. Today, I am back in Congress and this is going to be my final destination.

Q: What are you promising the constituency voters this time?

A: After this bypoll, I want to continue the pending irrigation projects, which I had taken up during my tenure. Moreover, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah will be announcing Rs 5 per litre as the procurement price for milk producers, shortly. As Channapatna is the highest milk-producing taluk in the State, this will be a huge boost to the milk producers here. I would like to see that implemented.

TAKING MORAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOGEESHWARA'S PROSPECTS: DKS

CHANNAPATNA, 9 NOV

Political stakes are high for Deputy Chief Minister and KPCC President DK Shivakumar in the Channapatna bypoll, which happens to be his home turf as well as his political opponent Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy.

Q: Do you still hold on to your statement that you are the "actual" candidate from Channapatna, though Congress' CP Yogeeshwara has his own vote base?

A: Of course I am the candidate. I have taken the moral responsibility for Yogeeshwara's prospects in this bypoll. I am asking for votes for myself. Though Congress has fielded Yogeeshwara, I am taking up the responsibility for the development of the taluk.

Q: As KPCC President and DyCM are the three Assembly bypolls a referendum on the government?

A: Of course. We are getting positive results from the three constituencies.

Fire breaks out at wood factory near Attibele

BENGALURU, 9 NOV

A fire broke out at a wood factory in Yadavanahalli near Attibele in the wee hours of Saturday. While no casualties were reported, the factory owner claimed valuables worth lakhs of rupees were destroyed. Residents noticed the fire at Sriram Wood Factory around 3.30am and alerted police and fire department. Five fire tenders doused the flames in three hours before it spread to adjacent buildings. *—Salar News*

4 killed in road accident in Kalaburagi

KALABURAGI, 9 NOV

Four people were killed after their car collided with a pickup goods vehicle near Maragutti cross in Kamalapura taluk here during the early hours on Saturday, police said. The deceased are Bhargav Krishna, 55, from Hyderabad, his wife Sangeetha, 45, and their son Uttam Raghavan, 28, and the identity of the deceased car driver has not yet been established, police said. *—PTI*

Byrathi failed to curb groupism in Kolar: Cong MLA

KOLAR, 9 NOV

Bangarpet MLA KM Narayanaswamy of Congress has raised objection to the style of functioning of Urban Development Minister Byrathi Suresh who is Kolar district in-charge minister. Suresh failed to curb groupism among factions in District Congress and instead has been a mute spectator for all such activities, Narayanaswamy said. The minister is making unilateral decisions on the transfer of senior bureaucrats. *—Salar News*

PM showing relentless favouritism towards Gujarat: Siddaramaiah

BENGALURU, 9 NOV

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Saturday accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of showing "relentless favouritism" towards his home state Gujarat.

Alleging that major investments are being "coaxed away" from thriving states like Karnataka and handed over to Gujarat, the CM demanded fairness and equal opportunity for all southern states.

Accusing Karnataka BJP MPs of sitting in silence, unwilling to question this blatant disregard for Karnataka's thriving tech and manufacturing ecosystem, he said, "Instead, they allow Modi's 'helicopter diplomacy' to serve Gujarat alone, leaving our state sidelined."

Their silence is a betrayal of Karnataka's interests, Siddaramaiah further said, adding, "It's time they break their silence, speak up for our state, and demand fairness and equal opportunity for Karnataka and all of South India." *—PTI*

Siddaramaiah *PHOTO: PTI*

- Alleging that major investments are being "coaxed away" from thriving states like Karnataka and handed over to Gujarat, the CM demanded fairness and equal opportunity for all southern states

UNSTOPPABLE ON TWO WHEELS

S Rajendra Kumar, Chief Post Master General, Karnataka, flags off an all-women bike rally titled 'South India Odyssey 24' organised by Postal Department, in Bengaluru on Saturday *PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD*

Traffic restrictions for Metro works in Shivajinagar

BENGALURU, 9 NOV

One lane of Venkataswamy Naidu Road from Balekundri Circle towards Shivaji Circle will be closed for traffic for 30 days from 11 November due to Metro construction work.

Vehicle movement from Balekundri to Shivajinagar BMTC Bus Stand via Shivaji Circle is restricted.

Alternate Routes

1. All vehicles coming from Balekundri Circle to Shivajinagar BMTC Bus Stand shall take a left turn at Traffic Headquarter Junction, proceed via Infantry Road and take a left turn at Central Street Junction, and reach BMTC Bus Stand.
2. Vehicles coming from Shivaji Road to Shivajinagar BMTC Bus Stand shall take a right turn at Shivaji Circle, proceed via Venkataswamy Naidu Road, take a left turn at Balekundri Junction, then left turn at Traffic Headquarter Junction and take a left turn at Central Street Junction.

—Salar News

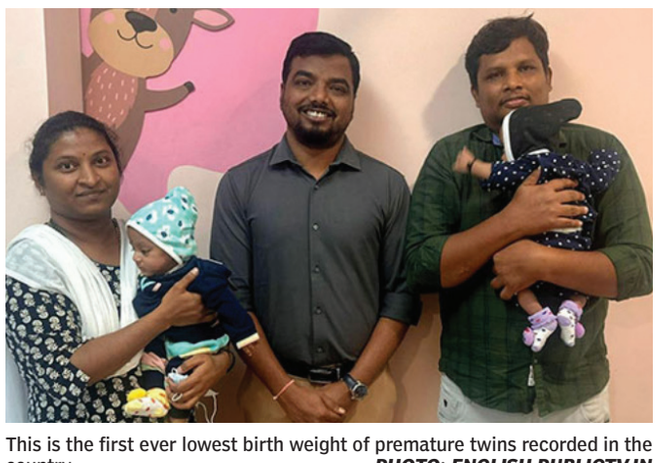
BORN AT 23 WEEKS

In a 1st, doctors save premature twins

BENGALURU, 9 NOV

In a heartwarming story from Tumakuru, pre-term twins were born prematurely at 23 weeks, each weighing around 500 grams and were saved in what is a highly skilful medical feat. This is the first ever lowest birth weight of premature twins recorded in the country.

The parents, who were part of a farming family, had been struggling to conceive for a long time before deciding to undergo fertility treatment. When the mother became pregnant with twins, the happiness of the family was short-lived as it was revealed that the mother had experienced a shortening of the cervix, leading to premature labour and the birth of the babies 17 weeks early.



This is the first ever lowest birth weight of premature twins recorded in the country *PHOTO: ENGLISH.PUBLICTV.IN*

The twins are part of the 0.3% of babies born with a birth weight of less than 600g worldwide, weighing 550g and 540g each. The babies were delivered at Aster Women and Children Hospital, Whitefield, and were later admitted to the NICU at the hospital for around three to four months for further care.

- The twins are part of the 0.3% of babies born with a birth weight of less than 600g worldwide, weighing 550g and 540g each

This case is striking if one takes into consideration data on preterm twins. While the survival rate of a singleton neonate (a single baby without a twin) born at 23 weeks is around 23.4 per cent worldwide, few such cases have been reported in India, according to a journal. However, the survival of neonate twins at a gestational age of 23 weeks has never been recorded before in the country. *—ANI*

Jewellery store guard flees with Rs 15 cr worth valuables

BENGALURU, 9 NOV

PHOTO: FREEPIK

Vijayanagara police have formed a team to nab a security guard of a jewellery store and his accomplices who are on the run after allegedly stealing valuables worth Rs 15 crore from the house of his owner in the City.

The theft took place at the house of Surendra Kumar Jain, owner of a jewellery store in Hosahalli near Vijayanagar here. Police registered a case against Nepal-based Namraj Bhatta, his wife and three other accused.

The complainant claimed that he went to Gujarat along with his family on a pilgrimage when his security guard Bhatta, his wife and the associates allegedly broke into his house and fled with valuables including 18.47kg of gold ornaments valued at Rs 14.75 crore and Rs 40 lakh in cash.

Returning to their house on Friday, the family were shocked to find the valuables stolen and Bhatta, along with his wife, missing. The family attempted to contact him but his phone was switched off.

After getting information that the accused was sighted in Nepal, a team has been sent to Nepal to nab the accused and bring them here," an official from Vijayanagar police station said. *—Salar News*

₹3.7 cr cash seized in poll-bound M'rashtra's Palghar

PALGHAR, 9 NOV

Police have seized more than Rs 3.70 crore cash from a van in Palghar district of Maharashtra amid the code of conduct in place for the November 20 assembly polls, an official said on Saturday. The cash was seized at Wada in the coastal district on Friday, police inspector Datta Kindre said. "The police's vigilance and flying squad received a tip-off that a van was transporting cash through the district. Based on the information, the team intercepted the van and carried out a check, during which it found that Rs 3,70,50,000 cash was being transported. The driver and security personnel failed to produce documents required for the transportation of the cash," he said. *—PTI*

MLA Tingre sent notice to Pawar in Porsche case: Sule

PUNE, 9 NOV

Baramati MP Supriya Sule has claimed that MLA Sunil Tingre of the ruling NCP has sent a legal notice to her father and NCP (SP) chief Sharad Pawar, asking him not to defame him in the Pune Porsche car hit-and-run case. Sule, who is the working president of NCP (SP), was speaking on Friday at a rally in support of party candidate Bapu Pathare contesting 20 November assembly election from the Vadgaon Sheri constituency in Pune. Without taking the name of Tingre, Sule said, "The person whom the party had given the ticket last time has now sent a notice that he will drag Sharad Pawar to court if he was defamed in the Porsche car case." Tingre, who is contesting the from Vadgaon Sheri as the candidate of the ruling NCP led by Ajit, faces the allegation of using his clout to protect the accused in the Porsche crash case. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Owaisi hits out at BJP over 'vote jihad' row

CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR, 9 NOV

AIMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi on Saturday slammed BJP over its leaders' "vote jihad" remark and asked if they use the same language when the prime minister visits Arab countries. The Hyderabad MP accused the ruling party of deflecting focus from core issues like farmer suicides in Maharashtra. He went door-to-door in Aurangabad Central constituency in Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar and interacted with voters. AIMIM has nominated Naser Siddiqui from the constituency, where he faces sitting MLA Pradip Jaiswal of Shiv Sena and Balasaheb Thorat of Shiv Sena (UBT), for the 20 November Maharashtra Assembly elections. He said 324 farmers have died by suicide in "Aurangabad division", but no one is talking about it. *—PTI*

Palakkad's trolley bag row boon for LDF: CPI(M)

PALAKKAD, 9 NOV

The ruling CPI(M) in Kerala on Saturday expressed confidence that the trolley bag controversy would cause set back to the Congress-UDF in bypoll-bound Palakkad and would turn out to be votes for the party-led LDF in the constituency in the 20 November Assembly byelection. The Left party said the midnight search issue and the subsequent trolley bag controversy had come up as part of the election process and there is no need to ignore it without discussing it. Police recently conducted a raid at a hotel in Palakkad on suspicion of the arrival of black money where prominent Congress leaders were staying. Addressing reporters here, CPI(M) state secretary MV Govindan said the state should discuss the matter in connection with the flow of hawala money (during election time). *—PTI*

Cong can't accept OBC as PM: Modi

Cong wants its own Constitution, says PM

NANDED, 9 NOV

Prime Minister Narendra Modi being felicitated during a public meeting ahead of the Maharashtra Assembly elections **PHOTO: PTI**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday claimed that Congress hates OBCs as it can not come to terms with the fact that a person from Backward Classes is at the helm of the country.

Division among Dalits, Adivasis and Backward Classes suits Congress' politics, but due to their unity it is losing its support base, he said, speaking at a campaign rally here for 20 November Maharashtra assembly elections and Nanded Lok Sabha bypoll.

"It suits the Congress' politics if Dalits, Adivasis and Backward Classes are divided. Its game plan is to divide you into different groups and communities," he said.

"Congress hates the OBCs because it cannot digest the fact that an OBC is the prime minister for ten years and working by taking everyone along," Modi said.

"Today, there is only one slogan on everyone's lips: BJP-Mahayuti ahe, tar gati ahe. Maharashtraachi pragati ahe (Only BJP-Mahayuti will ensure Maharashtra's speedy progress," he added.

Modi also accused Congress of wanting to implement its own Constitution instead of the one drafted by Dr BR Ambedkar.

BJP on Saturday claimed that the Maharashtra unit of Congress has assured a Muslim body that it will take steps to fulfil its demands including a 10 per cent quota for the minority community in jobs and education and a ban on the RSS if Maha Vikas Aghadi is voted to power in the state assembly polls.

Addressing a press conference here at the BJP headquarters, senior party leader Ravi Shankar Prasad said that the All India Ulama Board (AIUB) has written to Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) leaders offering its conditional support in assembly elections. *—PTI*

ASSEMBLY POLLS '24 MAHARASHTRA

Kharge hits back at 'batenge, katenge'

Many Cong leaders died for unity, says Kharge

NAGPUR, 9 NOV

Kharge also hit back at the BJP for criticising his party colleague Rahul Gandhi over a copy of the Constitution **PHOTO: PTI**

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Saturday asserted that several leaders from his party have laid down their lives to unite the country, countering Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath's 'batenge toh katenge' slogan.

Those who want the country to remain united will never pass such divisive remarks, he said.

Addressing a press conference in Nagpur city of Maharashtra, where assembly elections will be held on 20 November, he asked the BJP to decide between Yogi's slogan and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's unity message of "Ek hain, toh safe hain".

Kharge also hit back at the BJP for criticising his party colleague Rahul Gandhi over a copy of the Constitution with a red cover. He showed a picture of PM Modi gifting a similar copy to former president Ramnath Kovind.

The senior Congress leader accused the BJP and RSS of provoking people to gain votes. Citing a newspaper article, Kharge said he read that RSS favoured the slogan of 'batenge toh katenge' (if divided, we perish) being raised by the UP CM.

"First, you decide between yourselves whose slogan is to be followed – Yogi ji's or Modi ji's," he said, and added, "BJP leaders give inciting speeches and speak lies and divert people's attention from core issues."

Addressing a campaign rally in north Maharashtra, PM Modi had pitched for unity among SCs, STs and OBCs, saying, "Remember, 'Ek hain, toh safe hain" (we are safe if we are united).

Kharge stressed that many big Congress have laid down their lives to unite the country and attacked the BJP, saying, "You only divide but blame others. You say 'batenge toh katenge'. Those who want the country to remain united will never pass such slogans." *—PTI*

JHARKHAND POLL BATTLE

Union Home Minister Amit Shah addresses the joint 'Vijay Sankalp Sabha' of Hazaribagh, in Jharkhand **PHOTO: PTI**

Shah: Soren govt favored infiltrators

RANCHI, 9 NOV

Accusing Hemant Soren-led government in Jharkhand of according a red-carpet welcome to Bangladeshi infiltrators, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday said such forces will be deported as soon as BJP forms government in the state.

Shah also accused Congress leader Rahul Gandhi of insulting and making a mockery of the Constitution by showing a "fake" copy of it.

Shah also claimed that the BJP will never allow the Congress to implement reservations for minorities.

Shah alleged that Congress was "hell-bent on snatching reservations from OBCs, tribals and Dalits and "planned to give it to minorities".

Shah equated JMM with a "burnt transformer" that "failed" to relay the power of prosperity sent through the "high tension line" of Modi-led Centre.

BJP president Jagat Prasad Nadda on Saturday asserted that once the saffron party is voted to power in Jharkhand, it will not allow tribal rights to children of infiltrator father and local Adivasi mother.

"Children of Bangladeshi infiltrator father and Adivasi mother will be denied tribal rights if BJP is voted to power. It will not allow infiltration to continue," he said. *—PTI*

IT SLEUTHS RAID PREMISES OF CM'S AIDE IN J'KHAND

RANCHI, 9 NOV

Income Tax Department on Saturday conducted searches at multiple locations in poll-bound Jharkhand, including on the premises of a person linked to Chief Minister Hemant Soren, as part of a tax evasion probe, official sources said. A total of nine premises in the state's capital Ranchi and Jamshedpur are being raided in an operation that started early morning. A security team of the CRPF is assisting the I-T sleuths, the sources said. The locations linked to Sunil Shrivastava, an aide to the CM, are also being searched, they said.

The action is linked to recent probes launched over alleged illegal liquor trade and mining in the state, the sources said. *—PTI*

ASSEMBLY POLLS '24 JHARKHAND

'Demonetisation, GST meant to kill farmers'

Adressing another rally in Dhanbad, Rahul Gandhi charged government with a tax structure designed to 'loot the poor' **PHOTO: PTI**

BAGHMARA, 9 NOV

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Saturday attacked the BJP-led Centre, alleging that its policies on demonetisation and Goods and Services Tax (GST) were weapons to kill farmers, labourers and the poor.

He also claimed that a battle is on in India between the ideologies of the BJP-RSS and INDIA bloc, who are believers of hatred and love, respectively.

Congress leader also accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of funding capitalists who in turn invest money abroad. He, however, did not elaborate on the matter.

Addressing another rally at Baghmara in Dhanbad, the Congress leader charged the central government with formulating a tax structure designed to "loot the poor".

"Indian tax structure is to loot the poor. Adani pays taxes equivalent to you. Dharavi land worth Rs one lakh crore, is being handed over to him," Gandhi alleged.

In a no-holds-barred attack on BJP, Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren accused the saffron party of "squeezing the state like a lemon" for almost two decades and "smashing" backbones of poor states. *—PTI*

Jairam Ramesh **PHOTO: PTI**

Cong central vision vows nation-wide caste survey

NEW DELHI, 9 NOV

Congress on Saturday asserted that a nationwide caste survey and the lifting of the Supreme Court's "arbitrary ceiling" of 50 per cent on reservations for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes are central to its vision for the country.

Congress General Secretary in-charge, communications, Jairam Ramesh said in a post on X that the party's government in Telangana will begin its caste survey on Saturday.

He said 80,000 enumerators will be going door to door over the next few weeks, covering over 1.17 crore households across 33 districts.

This is the first time a caste-based survey is being conducted by the government in Telangana since 1931, Ramesh said.

It is also, as Rahul noted in Hyderabad earlier this week, a blueprint for the national caste survey that INDIA coalition's will conduct, he said. *—PTI*

Cong CMs counter BJP's poll promises

MUMBAI, 9 NOV

The Chief Ministers of Congress-ruled Telangana and Himachal Pradesh and the Deputy Chief Minister of Karnataka on Saturday vehemently countered BJP's allegation that the grand old party was not fulfilling the promises it made before the polls in these states.

Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, his Himachal Pradesh counterpart Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu and Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar addressed a press conference in Mumbai, the capital of Maharashtra where Assembly elections will be held on 20 November.

Incidentally, speaking at Akola in Maharashtra soon later, Prime Minister Narendra Modi targeted the Congress saying wherever the party forms a government, that state becomes an ATM of the party's 'shahi parivaar' (royal family), and named Telangana, Himachal Pradesh and Karnataka as examples of this. Shivakumar said, "Mahayuti leaders should visit my state to see how Congress' welfare guarantees are benefiting people."

Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, Karnataka DyCM DK Shivakumar and Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu **PHOTO: PTI**

Reddy accused Modi of lying about the scheme pertaining to his state. He said his government waived farm loans after coming to power. *—PTI*

SLAIN J&K VDGs GIVEN TEARFUL ADIEU

KISHTWAR/JAMMU, 9 NOV

The last rites of the two Village Defence Guards killed by terrorists were performed near their village in Jammu and Kashmir's Kishtwar district on Saturday, with locals demanding security and adequate relief, including a government job for each of the two families. The bodies of Nazir Ahmed, 42, and Kuldeep Kumar, 40, were found near a rivulet deep inside the Kuntwara forest on Friday after a hectic 12-hour-long search operation. The hunt for the terrorists behind the gruesome incident was underway, with additional forces mobilised from adjoining areas on Saturday to extend the cordon, officials said. The bodies of the two Village Defence Guards reached their homes in Ohli village late Friday night. Post-mortem examination of the bodies was conducted in the village in the morning. *—PTI*

AICC Secretary Mansoor Ali Khan along with Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar addresses a rally in Wayanad on Sunday. Shivakumar was in Kerala to support Priyanka Gandhi Vadra's candidacy and emphasised that she would be a strong and dedicated voice for the marginalised sections of the society **PHOTO: SALAR**

'WHO ATE HIS SAMOSAS?'

In a snub, BJP orders 11 samosas for Sukhu

HAMIRPUR/SHIMLA, 9 NOV

With samosa politics heating up in Himachal Pradesh, a BJP MLA has ordered 11 samosas online for Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu.

Taking a dig at the state's Congress government over the CID conducting an enquiry into the sequence of events that led to samosas brought for the Chief Minister being served to his security staff, Ashish Sharma, the MLA from Hamirpur, shared this information on social media on Saturday.

He said when the people of the hill state are fighting for their rights, the government should focus on real issues.

BJYM members during a march against the Himachal Pradesh government over the 'samosa' controversy in Shimla on Saturday **PHOTO: PTI**

On October 21, Sukhu had gone to attend a programme at the CID headquarters in Shimla, where samosas and cakes brought for the chief minister were served to his staff instead.

Meanwhile, the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha (BJYM), the youth wing of BJP, held a samosa-distribution programme in the state capital. Members of the outfit set up stalls in the city's lower bazaar area and distributed samosas among people for free.

The BJYM members also fed samosas to a poster of Sukhu. Amidst all the political furore, the Hotel Radisson's signature samosa, filled with khoya paneer and potatoes, has become a culinary sensation not only in Shimla but across India. Chef Rajiv's record-setting feat with khichdi brought him recognition, but this samosa has stirred a level of buzz he had never anticipated. *—Agencies*

Raliway porter dies in shunting accident in Bihar

BARAUNI, 9 NOV

A train accident at Bihar's Barauni Junction in Begusarai claimed the life of railway porter Amar Kumar Rao during a shunting operation on Saturday. Rao, employed at the station under the Sonpur Railway Division, was assisting the Lucknow-Barauni Express (train No. 15204) as it arrived from Lucknow Junction. While attempting to open the coupling on platform 5, the train unexpectedly reversed, trapping him between two carriages. Eyewitnesses reported that the train driver exited the train and fled the scene without stopping or reversing the engine, leaving Rao fatally injured. He was crushed and died instantly. Disturbing visuals from the scene show bystanders capturing photos of the accident. Railway authorities have since launched an investigation to determine the circumstances surrounding the incident.—*Agencies*

2 women burn five puppies alive in Meerut, FIR lodged

MEERUT, 9 NOV

Police from Meerut's Kankerkheda area have booked two women accused of burning alive five stray puppies by pouring petrol over them, officials said on Friday. The women, residents of the same neighbourhood, were allegedly frustrated by the continuous noise made by the puppies, according to locals. Station House Officer Jitendra Kumar told PTI that the FIR was filed based on the statement provided by Anshumali Vashishth, general secretary of the Animal Care Society. The two accused, Shobha and Aarti, have been booked under Section 325 of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act (mischief by killing or maiming animal) in the case lodged at Kankerkheda police station. Vashishth claimed that a street dog had recently given birth to five puppies, which were allegedly targeted by the accused women—*PTI*

3 dead in fire at Gujarat chemical warehouse

NAVSARI, 9 NOV

Three workers were charred to death and three others injured in a fire caused by a chemical leak at a godown in Gujarat's Navsari district on Saturday morning, police said. The blaze broke out around 9 am when workers were unloading barrels containing chemicals from a truck at a godown in Devsar village in Billimoria taluka, Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSoP) BV Gohil said. "Three workers died, and three others sustained injuries and were shifted to a hospital," he said. Gohil said five fire tenders were pressed into service from nearby talukas, and the blaze was brought under control. Mamlatdar Jagdish Chaudhary said chemicals leaked from one of the barrels in the truck, causing the fire —*PTI*

1 more dies in Kerala temple fire mishap, toll now 5

KASARAGOD, 9 NOV

One more person died on Saturday from the burns suffered in the recent fireworks accident at a temple near Neeleswaram in this district, raising the death toll to five, officials said. Rajith, who had been receiving treatment for severe burns at a private hospital in Mangaluru, died in the morning, officials said. "He had suffered over 50 per cent burns," one of the officials said. Earlier, four persons had died from burns sustained in the accident. According to the Kasaragod district administration, 154 people were injured in the accident and of them, 100 were admitted in various hospitals initially. As of 8 November, of the 100, 63 were undergoing treatment in various hospitals and out of them nine were in the ICU, the district administration said. —*PTI*

SC: Bail plea delays affect citizens' fundamental rights

SC was hearing on a plea pending in HC for over a year

NEW DELHI, 9 NOV

Deprecating the practice of courts keeping bail applications pending for years, the Supreme Court has said that even a single day's delay in deciding such matters adversely affects the fundamental rights of citizens.

The apex court has time and again emphasised the importance of personal liberty, a bench of Justices BR Gavai and KV Viswanathan said in an order passed on Friday.

"It has been observed by this court (that) even a single day('s) delay in deciding the bail application adversely affects the fundamental rights of the citizens," it said.

"We do not appreciate the practice of keeping bail application pending for years together," it said.

The top court's observation came while hearing a plea filed by a man who said his bail application was pending before the Allahabad High Court since August last year and there was no progress in the matter.

The petitioner said the matter was adjourned repeatedly before the high court without any effective hearing **PHOTO: PTI**

The petitioner said the matter was adjourned repeatedly before the high court without any effective hearing.

The SC noted that it has been informed that the matter was posted for hearing before the High Court on 11 November.

"... we request the judge, before whom the matter is placed, to take up the matter on the same date and decide it as expeditiously as possible and, in any case, within a period of two weeks from 11 November, 2024," the bench said, while disposing of the plea.

Meanwhile, the Supreme Court has agreed to hear a plea seeking to restrain the Delhi government from allowing felling of trees in the national capital without the apex court's permission.

- The apex court has time and again emphasised the importance of personal liberty, a bench of Justices BR Gavai and KV Viswanathan said in an order passed on Friday

The application, which stated that five trees are felled in Delhi every hour, also sought to restrain the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change from permitting diversion of forests in Delhi without the top court's nod.

The application referred to a February 2023 order of the Delhi High Court and said it was recorded that five trees were felled every hour in the national capital, based on the data provided by the Forest Department of Delhi. —*PTI*

POLLUTION ALERT

Water quality of Ganga worsens due to sewage: NGT

NEW DELHI, 9 NOV

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has raised concerns about the declining water quality of the Ganga in Uttar Pradesh due to untreated sewage discharge. Previously, the NGT requested compliance reports from various states, including Uttar Pradesh, to address pollution control in the river.

In an order dated November 6, NGT Chairperson Justice Prakash Shrivastava highlighted a report revealing a 128 million litres per day (MLD) shortfall in sewage treatment capacity in Prayagraj district. The report also noted that 25 drains discharge untreated sewage into the Ganga and 15 drains discharge into the Yamuna.

According to a Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) report from 22, October, 247 of 326 identified drains remain untapped, releasing 3,513.16 MLD of

PHOTO: PTI

wastewater into the Ganga and its tributaries. The NGT directed Uttar Pradesh's chief secretary to submit an affidavit detailing each district's drains, the generated sewage, proposed sewage treatment plant (STP) connections, and timelines for making STPs operational. The CPCB report also indicated that six of 41 STPs in 16 Ganga-front towns are non-functional, while only one of 35 operational STPs meets regulatory standards. Water quality monitoring revealed faecal coliform levels exceeding the safe limit of 500 MPN/100 ml at 16 locations, with 17 locations showing over 2,500 MPN/100 ml. —*PTI*

BY SEPT 2025

Ram temple completion delayed due to worker shortage, stone replacement

AYODHYA, 9 NOV

The completion date for the Ram temple in Ayodhya, originally set for June 2025, is now expected to be September 2025, according to Nripendra Mishra, the chairman of the construction committee.

Mishra attributed the delay to a shortage of approximately 200 workers and the need to replace certain stones on the temple's first floor. "We are currently experiencing a labour shortage, which is impacting the construction timeline," he said on Friday. "As a result, the expected completion has been pushed to September 2025 instead of June 2025." Mishra noted that while 8.5 lakh cubic feet of red 'Bansi Paharpur' stones for the temple's boundary have already been prepared and delivered to Ayodhya, the shortage of workers has slowed progress.

He also mentioned that some stones on the first floor appeared "weak and thin" and would be replaced with 'Makrana' stones to enhance durability.

The construction committee also assessed the status of the auditorium and circumambulation path, which remain under construction **PHOTO: X**

During a recent two-day meeting, the construction committee also assessed the status of related structures, such as the auditorium, boundary, and circumambulation path, which remain under construction. Mishra added that statues for the temple, including those depicting Lord Ram's court and six smaller temples, are being crafted in Jaipur and are expected to be delivered to Ayodhya by December.

"The sculptor has promised all statues will be ready by the end of the year," Mishra said, mentioning that placement details will be decided after delivery. Two Ram Lalla statues, already approved by the temple trust, will be installed in key locations. —*PTI*

Delhi: 1 killed in 2 firing incidents within 10 mins

NEW DELHI, 9 NOV

A man was killed and another injured in two incidents of firing carried out by three people in separate areas of northeast Delhi within a span of 10 minutes, police said on Sunday.

The accused first fired at a person in Welcome's Kabir Nagar around 1 am, looted his scooty and rode it to a location in neighbouring Jyoti Nagar and fired at a house, according to a senior police officer.

While Nadeem (alias Bobby) and Shahnawaz received bullet injure in the first incident, nobody was harmed in the second. Police said the two injured were taken to a hospital where Nadeem was declared dead, while Shahnawaz is recuperating, police said. Deputy Commissioner of Police (northeast) Rakesh Paweriya said the three suspects have been apprehended and are being interrogated. Meanwhile, another PCR call was received at 1.26 am from neighbouring Jyoti Nagar area about firing at a house by three men on a scooty.

The caller, identified as Rahul, said the accused came on a scooty and opened fire at his house but no one was injured in the incident. Six empty and a live cartridge were found at the spot. Another officer said the accused were later apprehended. It is suspected that the accused had a financial dispute involving Rs 10,000 with Nadeem. They wanted to target him but Shahnawaz also received bullet injury in his leg as he was was standing nearby.

- The accused first fired at a person in Welcome's Kabir Nagar around 1 am, looted his scooty and rode it to a location in neighbouring Jyoti Nagar and fired at a house, according to a senior police officer.

The accused are being further interrogated to ascertain the exact cause of shooting at both the places. —*PTI*

Andhra gets Vijayawada-Srisailam seaplane flight

AMARAVATI, 9 NOV

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Saturday launched a seaplane demo flight from Prakasam Barrage in Vijayawada to Srisailam in Nandyal district. Within an hour, he landed on water at Srisailam project (reservoir) in Nandyal.

After disembarking from the flight, the chief minister, who was also accompanied by Union Civil Aviation Minister K Ram Mohan Naidu, was received by the district officials.

Earlier, addressing a gathering the Chief Minister said, "This is a new experiment (seaplane demo flight). I am very happy. If anything new happens in the country, it should happen in Amaravati. We are going ahead with that motto." He highlighted that Prime Minister Narendra Modi also came forward to promote seaplane operations in the southern state, which does not require the expensive infrastructure needed for a regular airport —*PTI*

Though the accused Ashrafi tried to run away on seeing the police, he was later caught **PHOTO: FREEPIK**

Kerala madrassa teacher brands student with iron

KANNUR, 9 NOV

A Madrassa teacher was arrested for allegedly branding a student with an iron box in this north Kerala district, police said on Saturday. Umair Ashrafi, hailing from Tanur in neighbouring Malappuram district, was also accused of smearing chilli powder on the private parts of the boy, alleging disobedience, they said. As the student lodged a complaint with the police recently, the accused fled from the state and was staying in hideouts in various places in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.

Based on a tip-off that he was coming to his home district from Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu, a police team reached Tanur and waited for his arrival on Thursday. Though Ashrafi tried to run away on seeing the police, he was later caught. Ashrafi was produced before a local court. —*PTI*

Kerala CM accuses Centre of not giving aid to landslide victims

THRISSUR, 9 NOV

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Saturday again highlighted the issue of lack of Central assistance for the rehabilitation of those affected by the landslides that hit Wayanad in July, saying that nothing has come from the union government despite several reminders.

Vijayan, addressing a public meeting here as part of the campaign for LDF candidate in the Chelakkara assembly constituency, said that months after the disaster -- which claimed over 200 lives and destroyed hundreds of homes -- no assistance had reached the state from the Central government.

The CM said that several reminders, including a unanimous resolution passed by the assembly, were sent by the state government to the Centre. "While no assistance has come yet, they have not said no to our request. So, that is a good thing," he said.

Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan (inset) questioned why Kerala was ignored when other states were given financial aid **PHOTO: PTI**

At the same time, he questioned why Kerala was being ignored when other states affected by natural disasters were provided financial assistance. "Why was Kerala left out?" he asked.

Earlier on 31 October, Vijayan had lashed out at the Centre over the alleged lack of financial assistance from it for the rehabilitation of the victims of the Wayanad landslides. —*PTI*

Kerala HC overturns rejection of minor's abortion plea

KOCHI, 9 NOV

The Kerala High Court has set aside its single judge's order declining a 16-year-old rape victim's plea for abortion and allowed her to undergo the medical termination of her over 26-week long pregnancy.

A division bench of Chief Justice Nitin Jamdar and Justice S Manu said that while the medical board, after examining the girl, had opined that she would suffer mental trauma, the single judge did not consider it as there was no psychiatrist on the panel.

When the appeal came up before the division bench on 7 November, it had directed that the minor be examined by a psychiatrist and a report be submitted regarding her mental health in relation to the distress caused by the pregnancy. —*PTI*

YOUTUBE TUTORIALS

Duo makes ₹500 notes on ₹10 stamp papers in UP

NEW DELHI, 9 NOV

Two individuals were arrested for operating a counterfeit currency racket in Sonbhadra, Uttar Pradesh, and circulating fake notes worth Rs 30,000, officials reported Friday. The accused, identified as Satish Rai and Pramod Mishra, allegedly produced counterfeitRs 500 notes onRs10 stamp paper using a computer printer.

The stamp paper was purchased from Mirzapur. Acting on a tip-off, police apprehended the duo at Rajgarh Bazaar within the Kon Police station limits on Thursday night. During the arrest, authorities seized fake currency totaling Rs10,000 and 27 blank stamp papers. Pramod Mishra, hailing from Churuk Bazaar in Robertsganj, and Satish Rai from Chunar, Mirzapur, were reportedly en route to spend another Rs10,000 in fake currency at the Ramgarh market.

Both suspects have been charged and sent to jail, while the investigation continues to uncover potential links to a broader network**PHOTO: FREEPIK**

The counterfei Rs 500 notes all bore the same serial number, Additional Superintendent of Police Kalu Singh noted. "No one would easily detect they are fake unless they know specific features of genuine currency," he added. According to the police, Rai and Mishra learned how to print fake currency by watching YouTube tutorials. Their primary business involved printing ads for mineral water companies. Along with the counterfeit notes and stamp papers, authorities seized a laptop, printer, other printing equipment, and an Alto car believed to have been used to distribute the fake currency. Both suspects have been charged and sent to jail, while the investigation continues to uncover potential links to a broader network. "We are tracing their source for the stamps and anticipate further arrests," Singh said. —*Agencies*

Darul Uloom in UP lifts ban on entry of women

SAHARANPUR, 9 NOV

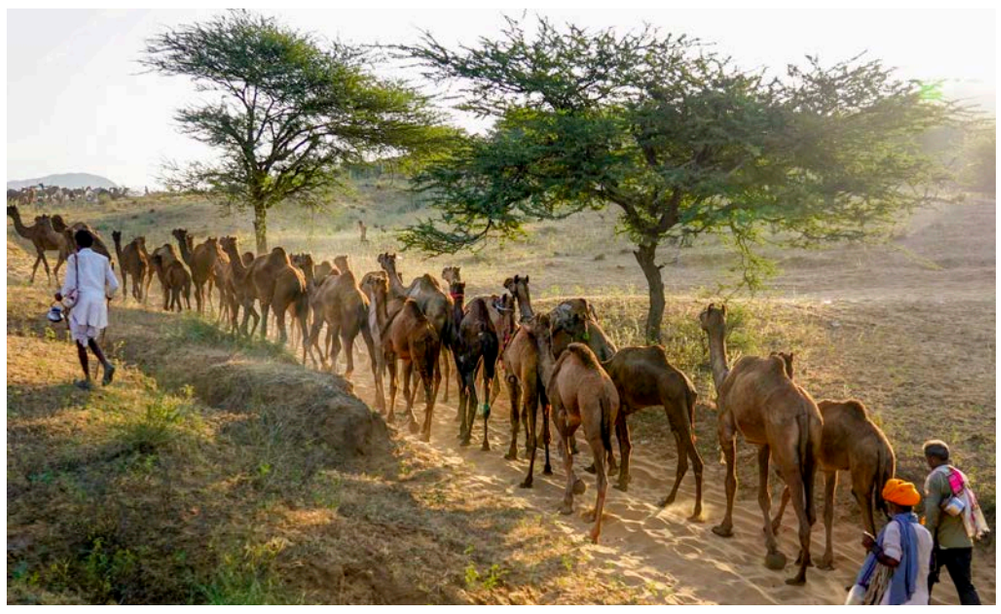
The ban on the entry of women in Darul Uloom, an Islamic seminary here in Deoband, has been lifted. They will now be able to enter the campus, subject to some rules, the institution said.

Women will have to wear hijab and have to be accompanied by a family member to enter the campus, according to the rules that came into effect on Friday.

The management of the Islamic educational institution, which earlier this year banned the entry of women over complaints of "reels" being shot inside the campus, said videography would be completely prohibited and visitors would have to deposit

their phones at the gate before entering.

Ashraf Usmani, media in charge at Darul Uloom, on Saturday said that after several rounds of talks, the management has issued rules for the entry of women coming from across the globe. Usmani said the Darul Uloom management has appointed an officer to issue visitor passes, which will apply to both men and women, for entry into the campus. —*PTI*



LARGEST CAMEL FAIR

Camel herders with their livestock arrive to attend the annual camel fair, in Pushkar, Rajasthan, on Saturday. This is one of the largest camel fairs globally and an event filled with culture, colour, and excitement
PHOTO: PTI

COP29: Will India finally address climate migration?

India is witnessing a myriad of issues caused by extreme weather events such as sweltering heat, droughts and massive flooding.

Among them, climate-induced migration holds particular significance for the South Asian nation, where a surprising number of people are already facing the threat of displacement with the figures expected to rise exponentially.

In 2020, an estimated 14 million people were forced to migrate as a consequence of extreme weather events, according to figures from the country's Internal Displacement Monitoring Center (IDMC).

IDMC's 2022 report states that India is seeing the third highest number of internal displacements due to disasters, after China and the Philippines.

The number of climate-related migrants in India is projected to reach 45 million by 2050, according to Climate Action Network South Asia.

"Many human mobilities are taking place that are, in part, due to climate change but are not identified as climate-linked," explained Mathew A Varghese, professor at the Center for Urban Studies at Mahatma Gandhi University in the state of Kerala.

Despite being the seventh most climate-vulnerable country in the world, facing the mammoth challenge of climate migration, India does not have concrete policies in place to address the issue.

In 2008, India launched the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC), which laid down a broad framework to address what India could do to tackle climate change in different sectors.

However, "there's a significant policy vacuum in terms of how the framework aims to manage displacement," Saransh Bajpai, associate program director for climate, economics and finance at India's World Resources Institute, told DW.

Despite being the seventh most climate-vulnerable country in the world, facing the mammoth challenge of climate migration, India does not have concrete policies in place to address the issue ***PHOTO: X***

In 2022, for the first time, Pradyut Bordoloi, a member of Parliament from the climate vulnerable eastern state of Assam, introduced the Climate Migrants (Protection and Rehabilitation) Bill as a private member's bill.

Bordoloi told DW the bill was motivated by the suffering of people in the Brahmaputra River islands who, after losing their homes and livelihoods each rainy season, are forced to relocate. He said that they become vulnerable to discrimination and persecution.

While introducing the bill, Bordoloi had said that the proposed legislation seeks to "establish an appropriate policy framework for the protection and rehabilitation of internally displaced climate migrants and for all matters connected therewith."

The bill also sought to establish a climate migration fund. However it was not passed.

"Local governments or state governments could play a partisan role which is why there should be a federal authority looking after the needs of climate migrants," Bordoloi told DW, adding that, "this authority should have budgetary allocation from the government of India." India lacks a policy on climate migration despite being a signatory to the UN's Sendai Framework, which recognizes disaster displacement as a significant issue and major driver of disaster risk. The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) also recognizes the subject of migration, displacement, and planned relocation, as a crucial climate risk management issue. COP28, last year's UN climate conference in Dubai, saw the first-ever global stocktake where human mobility was recognized as a major impact of climate change affecting people and communities. The Loss and Damage Fund, operationalized for the first time during the talks, also included displacement and displaced persons in its scope. India aims to take the lead in building a case for better climate finance opportunities for developing countries at next week's UN climate summit, COP29, which will take place in Azerbaijan's capital city, Baku. Despite its participation and active role in global forums discussing climate change, India fails to account for internal climate migration which has an enormous economic impact.

"India places itself very firmly in the global negotiation processes and has been very vocal as far as adaptation and loss and damage is concerned," said Bajpa, who noted that India could benefit from philanthropic financing for climate change.

"India should provide something innovative to ... engage with these philanthropies and pull in a no-strings-attached grant contribution," he said, adding that, "then the migration policy should enable creating a trusted financial mechanism in India." *—DW India*

SALAR سالار

Indian parents back Aus's social media ban for kids

Sapna Trivedi, a student of Class 12, spends at least three hours a day on Instagram despite knowing about its many pitfalls. "I waste my time using it," she says, underlining the addictive nature of the photo and short video-sharing platform.

The boon and bane of social media have long been a matter of heated discussion. But the Australian government's move to ban social media for children under the age of 16 through a "world-leading legislation" has renewed the debate.

While parents favour imposing such a ban in India, content creators say sensitisation and counselling are better approaches.

"Once teenagers get addicted, it creates distractions and they waste most of their time on social media which also affects their mental health," Trivedi, 17, said. Parents argue that social media platforms, including Instagram, YouTube and X, are addictive in nature and impact children's decision-making, self-perception and time management and also expose them to the risk of cyberbullying. Hema Natarajan, a teacher and mother of two 16-year-old girls, says children have "stopped thinking or making decisions on their own".

"It's always another person's opinion that is followed. Their language has become atrocious and communication with people around has reduced drastically," she argues.

Lakshmi Satish, a teacher and mother of two teenage girls, argues that even if children were emotionally evolved, "social media would make them feel inadequate".

"Their identity is all about who liked my story, who commented, who forwarded, how many likes, should I send a follow request, should I accept a follow request, private account, public account, when and why to unfollow," she says.

The Bengaluru-based teacher rues that social media has "disintegrated the growing mind's self-identity and self-worth". She also flagged the effects of cyberbullying.

Australia-based dentist Abhinav Sharma, the father of an 11-year-old girl, says social media has encouraged unhealthy competition among children.

"Social media is very addictive and can have a serious impact on a child's social and mental development. Instead of positive competition in sports and educational activities, there is serious competition among kids for the number of likes and views on their social media posts," he says.

He adds that since viewers are influenced by their favourite content creators, who glorify objects and products, it becomes hard for them to ignore the urge to buy the same things.

"This is a new and easy way of marketing adopted by companies -- pay the content creators and create content about the product. As a parent, I feel the disadvantages of social media outweigh its benefits," the 43-year-old dentist argues.

There are some like Ghaziabad-based teacher Pooja Verma, a mother of two, who believe that a relaxed and innovative approach to children's social media usage can do good for their growth.

Even though she is not in favour of Instagram and YouTube for their short video content, Verma said science and maths tutorials on YouTube have helped her daughter more than private tuition could.

"They use their father's tablet to watch educational videos on YouTube and also Google the meaning of words and other study-related stuff. We are generally close by when they use the tablet and we encourage them to watch educational videos," Verma said.

YouTube has also helped her 13-year-old daughter and 11-year-old son to continue listening to stories while travelling.

On the other side of the screen are the content creators -- influencers as they have come to be known -- who make short vertical videos on popular themes, music and film dialogues, largely to increase followers on their channels and make money through sponsored content and monetisation by social media platforms.

Arun Singh, a journalist and social media content creator popularly known as "Jhumroo", argues that a complete ban on anything only leads to an increase in its negative effects. "I don't think banning anything ever helps. And we are talking about the young generation. They have the acumen to battle these bans and challenges. It's going to invoke a feeling where they will revolt against it," Singh says. He argues that the internet has more advantages than disadvantages and a balanced approach through sensitisation and counselling should be taken.

"It's like sex education. Teenagers go through puberty and you are not going to stop them from being attracted to the opposite gender or whichever gender they are attracted to. You cannot stop that. You cannot regulate that but all you can do is counsel them well. I think counselling and sensitisation is required here," Singh said. *—PTI*

While parents favour imposing such a ban in India, content creators say sensitisation and counselling are better approaches ***PHOTO: PTI***

LETTERS write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

US prez election result: Where did Kamala and her campaign go wrong?

The pre-election predictions were clear: The contest between former president Donald Trump and Vice President Kamala Harris would be decided by the tiniest of margins.

But the final result of the US presidential election has seemingly defied those forecasts, with Trump winning both the popular vote and the Electoral College comfortably.

So how badly has Harris done, and where did her campaign go wrong — so wrong that Trump could end up with the largest popular vote margin of victory for any Republican candidate in 36 years?

Trump has already won 295 Electoral College votes while Harris stands at 226. The majority mark is 270.

Although ballots for voting precincts in many swing states have not been called, including Michigan, Wisconsin, Philadelphia, Georgia, Nevada and Arizona, Trump has already been declared winner in five of them, because the lead he enjoys there exceeds the votes still to be counted.

Nevada and Arizona are the only two states that have not yet been called, but pollsters now predict Trump should win both — which would put Trump's final Electoral College count at 312 votes.

Harris appears poised to lose all seven swing states. And the margin of her victory in decidedly "blue" or Democrat-leaning states has also shrunk. In the 2020 US election, Biden was up 16 points against Trump in New Jersey, for instance, whereas Harris won the state by only 5 points this time — that's almost within the margin of error for many pollsters.

She has also underperformed in neighbouring New York state, another deep blue stronghold. With 97 percent of votes counted, Harris has won by 11 percentage points. In 2020, Biden beat Trump in New York by 23 percentage points.

More than two years ago, in 2022, a New York Times poll found that only 26 percent of Democrats wanted their president, Joe Biden, to represent the party again in the 2024 race. In other words, three out of four Democrats were calling for a new leader.

Yet, following the party's success in the midterm elections that year, the Democrats decided to back Biden as their candidate for 2024. It was only after a disastrous debate performance against Trump in June 2024 that Biden pulled out of the race the following month. Harris had only four months to prepare and run her campaign. Despite some calls for a primary process to elect the party's new face, most heavyweight Democratic Party figures — including former president Barack Obama and wife Michelle — quickly endorsed Harris. She was eventually nominated without a primary. That meant that Harris was never tested this year in a contest against other presidential aspirants from her own party — which had a fait accompli thrust upon it.

Democatic candidate Kamala Harris also lost ground with Arab American and Muslim voters because of the Biden administration's full-throated support for Israel's brutal war on Gaza and Lebanon ***PHOTO: X/ @KAMALAHARRIS***

Harris had to pick up the campaign baton in July from a deeply unpopular president, whose ratings had been hovering in the low 40s. After the Trump-Biden debate that pushed the Democratic Party to change its nominee, Trump led Biden 49 percent to 43 percent in approval ratings, according to a New York Times/Siena College poll.

The vice president tried to distinguish her campaign from Biden's, promising that she was "turning the page" and that "we are not going back". However, when pushed in interviews or on TV shows about Bidenomics — Biden's economic policies — in particular, she struggled to differentiate herself from the president.

When asked whether there is anything she would have done differently than Biden over the past four years in an interview on The View in October, Harris responded, "There is not a thing that comes to mind in terms of — and I've been a part of most of the decisions that have had impact."

Harris lost ground with Arab American and Muslim voters because of the Biden administration's full-throated support for Israel's brutal war on Gaza and Lebanon. This culminated in the emergence of the Abandon Harris campaign that was endorsed by Green Party candidate Jill Stein. Gallup poll last year showed that the proportion of Black adults in the US who consider themselves Democrats had decreased from 77 percent in 2020 to 66 percent.

In the current election, Black voters supported Trump at levels not seen since George W Bush's election in 2000.

According to exit polls from the Associated Press, Trump won 20 percent of the Black vote this time. He won 13 percent of the community's vote in 2020 and 8 percent in 2016.

Harris also lost support among Latino voters. Exit polls revealed a substantial 14 percentage-point increase in Trump's support among this demographic compared to the previous presidential election in 2020. Latino voters, especially those in older age groups, were predominantly concerned with rising inflation rates, escalating healthcare expenses, and the increasing cost of housing, which took precedence over broader issues, according to a recent AP survey.

Women voters, a key part of the Harris campaign coalition, were anticipated to show heavy support for Harris at the polls on Election Day. A targeted advertising campaign urged conservative women to cast their ballots for Harris. Moreover, polls indicated that Harris maintained a substantial 20-point advantage over Trump on the issue of abortion rights. Earlt national exit polls revealed that Harris secured the support of 54 percent of women voters, falling short of Biden's performance in 2020 when he garnered 57 percent of the female vote.

But surveys before the election, and exit polls after the voting, both showed that women in the US rated inflation and other concerns about the economy as the most important issue before them — much more than abortion rights.

Courtesy, Al-Jazeera

PHOTO: ANI

'Candyman' star Tony Todd dies at 69

WASHINGTON, 9 NOV

Tony Todd, the actor best known for his portrayal of the killer in 'Candyman' and its 2021 sequel, as well as roles in the 'Final Destination' franchise and 'Platoon', died on 6 November at his home in Los Angeles. He was 69, reported Deadline. Born on 4 December, 1954, in Washington, DC., Todd pursued acting at the Eugene O'Neill National Actors Theatre Institute and Trinity Rep Conservatory. His significant contributions to horror cinema, particularly his leading role in 1992's 'Candyman', led to his recognition with a Lifetime Achievement Award at the New York City Horror Film Festival. Todd was also seen in the series '21 Jump Street', 'Night Court', 'MacGyver', 'Matlock', 'Jake and the Fatman', 'Law & Order', 'The X-Files', 'NYPD Blue', and 'Beverly Hills 90210', .*—ANI*

Gunmen kill highest-ranking Mexico's navy officer

MEXICO CITY, 9 NOV

Gunmen on Friday killed a navy rear admiral in Mexico, one of the highest-ranking officers slain in the country in a decade. Mexico's navy said that a rear admiral — which is just below full admiral, the navy's highest rank — had been shot to death in the Pacific coast port city of Manzanillo. Local media gave his name as Fernando Guerrero Alcántar, but a navy spokesman would not confirm that or whether he was in uniform at the time. The navy said in a statement that he was driving in his own private vehicle when the attack occurred, so it was unclear if the gunmen knew who he was. He would be one of the highest-ranking military officers killed in Mexico since 2013. *—PTI*

Man arrested after 9 stabbed over 2 days in Seattle

SEATTLE, 9 NOV

A man has been arrested in a spate of random stabbings over two days in Seattle, in which nine people were injured—five of them on Friday afternoon, police said. The stabbings on Friday afternoon took place in a roughly four-block area in Seattle's Chinatown-International District. Witnesses reported a description of the suspect and officers found him nearby and took him into custody, police said. A weapon was found near the person who was arrested, and a knife was lodged in one of the victims, police said. Four of the victims were taken to Harborview Medical Center in Seattle and one victim was treated at the scene and released. A Harborview spokesperson confirmed four victims were at the hospital and said all were in critical condition.*—PTI*

Pelosi blames Biden for election defeat

Nancy said if Biden had left the prez race sooner, the party could have had an open primary

WASHINGTON, 9 NOV

Former House speaker and Representative Nancy Pelosi balmed President Joe Biden for this week's loss and said that it would have been better for the Democratic Party if he had abandoned his re-election campaign sooner and the party had then held a competitive primary process to replace him.

"Had the president gotten out sooner, there may have been other candidates in the race," Pelosi said during a podcast interview the New York Times reports, external. "The anticipation was that, if the president were to step aside, that there would be an open primary."

Meanwhile, team Biden advisers are pointing the finger at Team Harris advisers and vice-versa, going from blaming President Biden for running at all, to Vice President Harris for how the campaign was run.

However, Pelosi said she thought the Democratic candidate, Vice President Kamala Harris, "would have done well in that and been stronger going forward. But we don't know that. That didn't happen."

Nancy Pelosi reportedly pressurised Joe Biden to abandon his campaign. *PHOTO: @USA_ELECTIONSS*

Republican Donald Trump soundly defeated Harris in Tuesday's election to recapture the White House.

When Biden dropped out four months before Election Day, following a disastrous debate against Trump, the party rapidly came to a consensus around making Vice-President Kamala Harris its nominee. Pelosi in the interview criticised Biden for endorsing Harris quickly after leaving the race, as well, saying that too had foreclosed the possibility of a primary.

Other Democrats have blamed Biden for Harris's election loss, but none has the political sway of Pelosi, who played a major role in pushing him out of the race.

Trump wins Nevada

Trump won Nevada on Saturday, returning the state and its six electoral votes to Republicans for the first time since president George W Bush carried it in 2004.

Trump and Harris made multiple campaign stops in the state this year. *—PTI*

Trump puts Musk on call with Zelenskyy

KYIV, 9 NOV

President-elect Donald Trump put billionaire Elon Musk on the line with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy when the Ukrainian leader called to congratulate him, according to a Ukrainian official with direct knowledge of the phone call.

Trump seemingly handed his phone over to Musk, a source said, and the Ukrainian President thanked the SpaceX owner for assisting his country with access to the Starlink satellite internet platform.

The presence of Musk on the call highlights his influence in the President-elect's circle. Trump has mused that Musk could have a formal role in his administration that focuses on government efficiency, raising questions about potential conflicts of interest given SpaceX's lucrative government contracts.

PHOTO: PTI

Trump's interactions with Zelenskyy are being closely watched as he prepares to take over the presidency on 20 January and has signalled a shift in Washington's steadfast support for Ukraine against Russia's nearly three-year-old invasion.

Trump has promised to swiftly end the war and suggested that Kyiv should agree to cede some territory to Moscow in return for peace, a condition Zelenskyy has rejected. *—PTI*

FBI, Justice Dept probe racist mass texts

Several federal and state agencies are investigating how racist mass texts were sent to Black people across the country in the wake of the presidential election this week. The text messages invoking slavery were sent to Black men, women and children, prompting inquiries by the FBI and other law enforcement departments. The anonymously sent messages were reported in several states, including New York, Alabama, California, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Maryland and Tennessee. The FBI said it has communicated with the Justice Department about the messages, and the Federal Communications Commission said it is investigating alongside federal and state law enforcement. *—PTI*

"Trump's story is America's story. Trump's comeback is now hopefully America's comeback,"

—Vivek Ramaswamy, Indian-American politician

Chinese man held for entering Trump's home

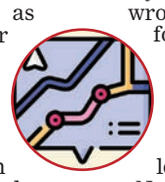
A Chinese national was ordered held Friday on trespassing charges after police say he tried to enter President-elect Donald Trump's Mar-a-Lago estate in violation of a court order that he stay away following previous attempts. Zijie Li, 39, is being held without bond at the Palm Beach County Jail after being arrested Thursday when he arrived at Mar-a-Lago's entrance gate in an Uber, the latest in a series of contacts he's had with police and Secret Service agents at or near the estate since July. Li, who lives in suburban Los Angeles on a student visa, had just been released from a mental hospital, where he had been placed in late October after police found him near the estate.

S Korea blames North for GPS 'jamming attack'

SEOUL, 9 NOV

South Korea's military said North Korea disrupted GPS signals from border areas for the second-straight day on Saturday, affecting an unspecified number of flights and vessel operations.

Tensions between the rival Koreas have escalated as North Korean leader Kim Jong Un flaunts his advancing nuclear and missile programme and engages in electronic and psychological warfare, such as flying thousands of balloons to drop trash and anti-South Korean propaganda leaflets in the South.



South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said North Korean operations to manipulate GPS signals were detected from around the western border city of Kaesong and the nearby city of Haeju on Friday and Saturday, and said the activities disrupted dozens of civilian aircraft and several vessels.

North Korea's GPS signal disruptions and balloon campaigns highlight the vulnerability of South Korea's Incheon International Airport, its main transportation gateway, analyst Sukjoon Yoon recently wrote on the North Korea-focused 38 North website.

The airport, which carries 56 million people and 3.6 million tons of cargo annually, is less than 100 km from North Korea.

"GPS interference can endanger commercial airlines flying in poor visibility, and it is a violation of international conventions on navigational safety," Yoon wrote. He said that in 2024, North Korean trash balloons halted the airport's runway operations 12 different times for a total of 265 minutes. *—PTI*

Pakistan: 27 killed, 62 injured in suicide bombing at rly stn

ISLAMABAD, 9 NOV

At least 27 people were killed and 62 others injured on Saturday in a suicide bombing at a railway station in Pakistan's Balochistan province. The explosion ripped through the railway station of the provincial capital Quetta as passengers gathered on the platform before the departure of the Jaffar Express, scheduled to depart for Peshawar at 9am.

Quetta Division Commissioner Hamza Shafqaat said it was a suicide attack and 24 people were killed.

The suicide bomber had entered the station with luggage, the Commissioner said, adding that was difficult to stop a person coming with an intention to carry out a suicide attack. Baloch Liberation Army (BLA), an ethnic Baloch separatist group designated as a terrorist organisation, has claimed responsibility for the attack. BLA alleges that the government exploits Balochistan's resources while neglecting the province's development. The suicide bombing comes a week after a blast near a girl's school and a hospital in Balochistan's Mastung district killed eight people, including five children. *—PTI*

Security officials examine the site of a bomb explosion at railway station in Quetta, southwestern Pakistan, on Saturday *PHOTO: PTI*

Ricky Kej and Anoushka Shankar *PHOTO: INSTAGRAM*

India's Ricky Kej bags 4th Grammy nomination

LOS ANGELES, 9 NOV

Ricky Kej and Anoushka Shankar are among the Indians nominated for the 67th Grammy Awards.

Kej, a three-time Grammy winner, earned his fourth nomination for 'Break of Dawn' in the Best New Age, Ambient, or Chant Album category, as announced by the Recording Academy on Friday.

The category, which includes albums featuring more than 75 per cent new vocal or instrumental new age recordings, also features 'Chapter II: How Dark It Is Before Dawn' by sitarist and composer Shankar.

Other nominees in this category are 'Warriors of Light' by Radhika Vekaria and 'Triveni' by entrepreneur and musician Chandrika Tandon, created in collaboration with flautist Wouter Kellerman and cellist Eru Matsumoto. *—PTI*

Israel kills 13 in Gaza as first aid in weeks reaches city

One of the strikes hit a school-turned-shelter in Gaza City's eastern Tufah neighbourhood *PHOTO: PTI*

TEL AVIV, 9 NOV

Two separate Israeli strikes killed at least 13 people, including women and children, in Gaza on Saturday, Palestinian medical officials said, as Israel announced the first delivery of aid in weeks to the war-battered northern Gaza.

One of the strikes hit a school-turned-shelter in Gaza City's eastern Tufah neighbourhood, killing at least six people, Gaza's Health Ministry said. Two local journalists, a pregnant woman and a child were among the dead, the ministry said. The Israeli army said the strike targeted a militant belonging to the Palestinian Islamic Jihad militant group, offering no evidence or further detail.

Another seven people were killed when an Israeli strike hit a tent in the southern city of Khan Younis where displaced people were sheltering, according to Nasser Hospital.

COGAT, the Israeli military body in charge of humanitarian aid to Gaza, said Saturday that 11 aid trucks containing food, water and medical equipment reached the far north of the enclave, including the urban refugee camp at Jabaliya. It is the first time any aid has reached the far north of the enclave since Israel began a fresh military campaign there last month. *—PTI*

NATURE'S FURY

MOUNT LAKI LAKI UNLEASHED

Indonesia's Mount Lewotobi Laki Laki volcano spewed towering columns of hot ash high into the air on Saturday, days after a huge eruption killed nine people. Activity at the volcano on the remote island of Flores, in East Nusa Tenggara province, has increased since Monday's eruption. Friday's activity saw the largest column of ash so far recorded at 10km high. The eruptions have affected more than 10,000 people in 14 villages.

CALIFORNIA FIREFIGHTERS CONTAIN WILDFIRE

Curtis Kabey hoses down hotspots at a home destroyed by the Mountain Fire in Camarillo, California. Southern California firefighters made progress against the wildfire that started on Wednesday in Ventura County and had grown to 83sq km. It was 14% contained Friday evening. Thousands of people remained under evacuation orders as the fire continued to threaten about 3,500 structures in suburban neighborhoods, ranches and agricultural areas around Camarillo in Ventura County.

RAFAEL SWIRLS OVER GULF OF MEXICO

Hurricane Rafael weakened into a tropical storm on Friday as it swirled through the Gulf of Mexico where it was expected to break apart after plowing through Cuba, knocking out the country's power grid and collapsing hundreds of houses. On Friday, the tropical storm was located 390km north of Progreso, Mexico.

Delhi High Court grants relief to Ambuja cement

NEW DELHI, 9 NOV

Delhi High Court has ruled in favour of Ambuja Cement Limited, setting aside a show cause notice and an order demanding Rs218.87 crore in stamp duty along with a Rs69 crore penalty. S&A Law Offices acted for Ambuja Cement Limited (ACL), wherein ACL had challenged the order passed by the Collector of Stamps, Delhi, directing ACL to pay stamp duty of Rs218,87,81,917.26 along with a penalty of Rs69 crores on the merger order dated 14.11.2011. Amongst the various grounds of Challenge, the Hon'ble High Court of Delhi, while holding that an order of amalgamation under Sections 391 to 394 of the Companies Act, 1956 was an instrument exigible to stamp duty, was pleased to hold that AWCL was covered under Notification No. 13. *—ANI*

Coal ministry 'optimistic' about 170 MT target in FY25

NEW DELHI, 9 NOV

The government on Saturday expressed optimism that it will achieve the production target of more than 170 million tonnes from captive and commercial coal blocks in the ongoing fiscal year. The production from captive, commercial mines from April 1 to November rose 33 per cent to 100.08 MT over 75.05 MT in the year-ago period, the coal ministry said in a statement. The total dispatch from captive, commercial coal mines during the period rose to 107.81 MT from 80.23 MT, it said. "The coal ministry is optimistic about reaching a production target of more than 170 million tonnes from captive and commercial coal blocks in 2024-25," the statement said. "The share of captive and commercial coal mines in India's total coal production has been steadily increasing." *—PTI*

Action Construction Equipment Q2 PAT grows 28%

NEW DELHI, 9 NOV

Action Construction Equipment Ltd has reported a 28 per cent rise in consolidated profit after tax (PAT) at Rs 94.82 crore for September quarter, on account of higher income. It had posted a PAT of Rs 73.94 crore for the quarter ended September 2023, the company said in an exchange filing on Friday. Income increased to Rs 790.90 crore from Rs 690.21 crore in the year-ago quarter. For the April-September period, the company reported a PAT of Rs 179 crore, higher from Rs 141.51 crore in the corresponding six-month period of FY24. Revenue from cranes, material handling & construction equipment segment during the quarter was Rs 693.07 crore. *—PTI*

FCI, state agencies procure 120.67 LMT paddy in Punjab

NEW DELHI, 9 NOV

Food Corporation of India (FCI) and state agencies of Punjab have procured 120.67 lakh metric tonnes (LMT) of paddy in a total of 126.67 LMT of paddy arrived in the mandis of Punjab, an official release said. The paddy is being purchased at MSP at Rs 2320 per quintal as decided by the Government of India for Grade 'A' paddy and the total paddy purchased by the Government to date in the ongoing KMS 2024-25, amounts to Rs 27995 crore benefitting around 6.58 lakh farmers, in Punjab. Further, 4839 millers have applied for shelling of paddy and 4743 Millers have already been allotted work by Punjab State Government. The Procurement of Paddy for KMS 2024-25 has commenced in Punjab from 1 October this year and 2927 designated mandis and temporary yards are operational throughout the State for smooth procurement from the farmers of Punjab. Central Government has fixed an estimated target of 185 LMT for Paddy Procurement for the ongoing KMS 2024-25 which shall continue upto 30 November. *—ANI*

FPIs sold equities worth ₹19,994 crore in November

Highest single-day selling was on 1 Nov worth ₹5,635 cr

NEW DELHI, 9 NOV

The Indian stock markets continue to feel the pressure from sustained selling by foreign portfolio investors (FPIs).

According to the National Securities Depository Ltd (NSDL) data, FPIs have offloaded equities worth a significant Rs 19,994 crore in just the first five trading sessions of November, intensifying concerns about market stability.

The data also indicated that the highest single-day selling was recorded last Friday, with foreign investors selling shares worth Rs 5,635 crore.

This aggressive selling trend by FPIs has dragged down the major Indian indices, the Nifty 50 and Sensex, both of which have dropped by around 8 per cent since the beginning of this selling spree in October.

In October, FPIs marked their highest monthly selling ever of shares sold through the exchanges **PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA**

In October, FPIs marked their single highest monthly selling activity ever, with a record Rs 1,13,858 crore worth of shares sold through the exchanges.

The scale of this outflow highlights the cautious approach FPIs have taken towards Indian equities. However, despite this heavy selling in the secondary market, FPIs have remained active buyers in the primary market.

In October, FPIs invested Rs 19,842 crore in initial public offerings (IPOs) and other primary market opportunities, showing a selective interest in certain sectors and new companies entering the market.

Experts suggest that the volatility could continue in the near term as foreign investors realign their portfolios.

This sustained FPI selling has injected a degree of uncertainty into the Indian equity markets, and experts are closely watching for signs of stabilisation as domestic institutional investors try to counterbalance the outflows. *—ANI*

ACCORDING TO REPORTS

'Dollar's share declines globally, gold a safer asset'

NEW DELHI, 9 NOV

PHOTO: ANI

Central banks around the world could continue expanding their gold reserves amid ongoing geopolitical uncertainties, as highlighted in a recent report by Quantum Mutual Fund.

The report pointed to a trend of steady investment in gold and reserve diversification by central banks, which is expected to persist this year due to rising tensions in the Middle East, upcoming elections in the US and Europe, and an increasingly fragmented global economy.

"The trend of investments into gold and diversification of reserves continues. We believe this trend is likely to continue this year amid geo-political uncertainties in middle east" said the report.

According to report, these factors continue to make gold an attractive option for central banks aiming to reduce reliance on the US dollar, which has faced challenges from the US's growing debt and budget deficits. As the dollar's share of global reserves declines, many countries see gold as a safer asset. *—ANI*

Trump's tariffs on China will boost India trade

PHOTO: PTI

NEW DELHI, 9 NOV

After the victory of the Donald Trump in the US Presidential elections, India could benefit from any re-orientation of the global supply chain away from China says a report from Care Edge

The report highlighted the Trump's plans include imposing a 60 per cent tariff on imports from China, as well as additional tariffs ranging from 10 per cent to 20 per cent on imports from other countries.

The report said "Higher tariffs could result in disruption of global trade flows and overall weaker trade growth. They will also lead to inflationary pressure in the US economy, with upward pressure on prices of imported goods".

While India stands to gain from any re-orientation of supply chains, a broad slowdown in global trade would have mixed effects on its economy. Weaker trade growth worldwide could dampen demand for Indian exports, affecting various industries within the country.

As per report, Trump's proposed tariffs extend beyond China. The president-elect has also targeted Mexico with plans to impose a 100 per cent to 200 per cent tariff on cars manufactured there.

While these potential policy shifts represent challenges to global trade, they also provide India with a strategic opportunity to attract businesses looking to shift operations away from China.

Overall, India's ability to capitalise on this shift will depend on its efforts to strengthen its industrial infrastructure, improve ease of doing business, and establish itself as a reliable manufacturing hub in the global supply chain. *—ANI*

FM reviews performance of 10 RRBs

BENGALURU, 9 NOV

Union Finance and Corporate Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday reviewed the performance of 10 Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) of the Southern Region in Bengaluru.

The Union Finance Minister reviewed the performance of RRBs of Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Kerala and UT of Puducherry, the Ministry of Finance stated in a post on social media platform X.

The meeting was also attended by Union Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary, the Department of Financial Services (DFS) secretary, senior officials from the DFS, officials from the state governments, representatives of SIDBI, NABARD, stakeholders of RRBs, and sponsor banks.

Nirmala Sitharaman **PHOTO: ANI**

The Finance Minister has been reviewing the performance of RRBs across the country due to their crucial role in supporting the rural economy.

In August, during a meeting with RRBs in Delhi, the Union Finance Minister urged RRBs and their sponsor banks to put greater thrust on the clear identification of beneficiaries while sanctioning loans under various schemes such as PM Vishwakarma and PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana.

RRBs, during the meeting, were also directed to increase their share in ground-level agriculture credit disbursement.

India's approach to spreading digital infrastructure networks by country's "public money" instead of choosing private players, unlike other countries, helped the micro-level players and businesses to grow, said Sitharaman.

Interacting with the students at JAIN University in Bengaluru, Sitharaman added that the government and stakeholders played an important part in making the evolution of digital infrastructure successful. *—ANI*

Urban consumption likely to be hit by slowdown in bank credit growth: Crisil

NEW DELHI, 9 NOV

The recent slowdown in the bank credit growth especially in the personal loans is likely to impact the consumption in the urban areas, says a report by Crisil.

The report indicated that the delayed impact of past interest rate hikes by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is beginning to show up in the broader economy, with bank credit growth decelerating over the last three months. This slowdown is especially concerning for the personal loans segment, which has a direct link to consumer spending in urban areas.

The report highlighted that in October, overall bank credit growth dropped to 11.5 per cent, down from 13 per cent in September, marking a significant deceleration. Sector-specific data for September shows that credit growth has eased across multiple categories.

- The report highlighted that in October, overall bank credit growth dropped to 11.5 per cent, down from 13 per cent in September

As per report, a closer look within the personal loans category reveals that credit card growth, which fuels a substantial amount of discretionary spending, slowed sharply to 18 per cent from 19.9 per cent.

Credit growth for non-banking financial companies (NBFCs), a component of the services sector, also declined significantly to 9.5 per cent from 11.9 per cent, partly due to the RBI's recent crackdown on risky lending practices.

This credit slowdown could have a significant impact on urban consumption, as many urban households rely on personal loans and credit cards for both essential and non-essential purchases. *—ANI*

LIFE INSURERS SECTOR REPORTS 13.16% GROWTH

NEW DELHI, 9 NOV

The Indian life insurance sector recorded a robust year-on-year (YoY) growth in new business premiums (NBPs) for October 2024, with premiums increasing by 13.16 per cent compared to the same period last year, Life Insurance Council observed in its October 2024 business report.

NBP collections surged from Rs 26,819.01 crore in October 2023 to Rs 30,347.6 crore in October 2024.

The insurance sector witnessed a remarkable year-to-date (YTD) performance with collections rising 18.56 per cent, from Rs 1,85,195.81 crore to Rs 2,19,561.64 crore, as per the Life Insurance Council.

The month of October 2024 saw only 12,01,214 policies issued. *—ANI*

ATC must use AI to manage air traffic: Official

NEW DELHI, 9 NOV

Emphasising the need for ways to further streamline air traffic movements in the Indian airspace, Civil Aviation Secretary Vumlunmang Vualnam on Saturday suggested that air traffic controllers should look at the use of new technologies such as generative artificial intelligence.

He was speaking at the 40th Asia Pacific Regional Meeting (APRM) of the International Federation of Air Traffic Controllers' Associations (IFATCA), hosted by the Air Traffic Controllers' Guild (India), in the national capital.

The three-day meeting, with the theme 'Safety in Future Air Traffic Management', began on Saturday.

The participants will discuss cutting-edge technologies, innovative strategies, and sustainable practices that will shape the safety in future air traffic management, according to the meeting's website.

He also suggested that ways should be looked on how to streamline air traffic management. *—PTI*

'Oil prices would have hit roof without Russian imports'

NEW DELHI, 9 NOV

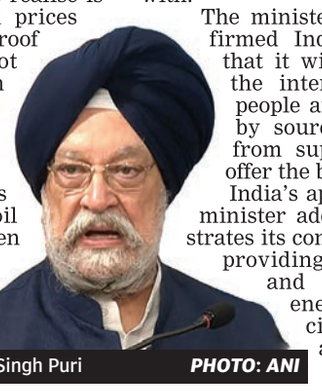
Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri emphasized that global oil prices would have increased tremendously if India had not purchased oil from Russia.

Speaking about India's energy strategy, Puri highlighted that without these purchases, oil prices worldwide would have surged to even higher levels.

He also pointed out that while some countries criticize India's continued energy imports from Russia, they overlook the benefits that India's actions bring to the broader global energy market.

"While they remain fixated on India's oil purchases from Russia, what many around the world don't seem to realise is that the global oil prices would have hit the roof if India had not bought oil from Russia" said Puri in a social media post.

The minister noted that India's decision to source oil from Russia has been instrumental in ensuring a balance between energy affordability, availability, and sustainability, a difficult "trilemma" that many nations have struggled with.



Hardeep Singh Puri **PHOTO: ANI**

The minister also reaffirmed India's stance that it will prioritize the interests of its people and economy by sourcing energy from suppliers that offer the best prices.

India's approach, the minister added, demonstrates its commitment to providing affordable and sustainable energy to its citizens, even amid global uncertainty and fluctuating oil prices.

- The minister noted that India's decision to source oil from Russia has been instrumental in ensuring a balance between energy affordability

As oil prices remain volatile, as per minister, India's policy of diversifying its energy sources has become a key factor in helping stabilise domestic prices, maintaining energy security, and cushioning the impact of price spikes on its citizens. *—ANI*

PEOPLE IN DISTRESS

Onion prices soar in 3 cities to ₹80 per kg

NEW DELHI, 9 NOV

Onions have got citizens teary-eyed as the prices have surged across the markets in several cities, leaving customers in distress.

The price of onions has risen from Rs 40-60 kg to Rs 70-80 per kg at the wholesale markets.

Speaking to ANI, a seller at a market in Delhi said, "The price of onions has risen from Rs 60 to Rs 70 per kilo. We source it from the mandi so the prices we receive from there affect the prices on which we sell it. There has been a reduction in sales because of the price hike but people are still purchasing it since it is an important part of food eating habits here."

Price of onions has risen from Rs 40-60 kg to Rs 70-80 per kg **PHOTO: ANI**

A buyer, Faiza shared her distress over the price hike of onions and said, "The price of onions has shot up even though it should have come down according to the season. I purchased onions at 70 Rs per kilo. It has affected food-eating habits in the household. I appeal the government to atleast reduce the prices of vegetables that are eaten every day."

The price of onions in Delhi is around Rs 80 per kilogram as of 8 November, 2024.

The price of onions has been on the rise in many states of the country including across the markets in Mumbai.

Aakash, another buyer said, "Prices of onions have hiked up. The price of onions has risen from 40-60 Rs per kilo to 70-80 Rs per kilo. But like Sensex hike and fall, the onion price will also come down."

Kishore, a seller in the market said, "The price of onions has hiked because of inflation. The price has risen 60 to 70-75, but it is a staple vegetable so consumers are coming and purchasing it." *—ANI*

AI Express plans more int'l flights; to have 110 planes

NEW DELHI, 9 NOV

Expanding its network and tapping group synergies, Air India Express will focus on connecting smaller cities and towns with metros as well as fly to new overseas destinations, according to senior officials.

The airline, which recently completed the merger of AIX Connect with itself, has a fleet of around 90 aircraft and the count is expected to cross 110 by the end of this fiscal.

It also aims to fly to a total of 55 destinations by the end of March 2025 and has also rationalised its network as part of Air India Group strategy. Apart from adding domestic routes, the Tata Group-owned airline will start flights to more foreign destinations, including Bangkok and Phuket in Thailand, the officials said.

Air India Express Managing Director Aloke Singh said the airline will focus on Tier 2 and 3 cities and towns as they are the growth engines, and the largest chunk of the market is metro to non-metro.

He also stressed that the airline's network strategy is also deeply woven into the group network strategy. As part of consolidating its airline business, Tata Group has merged AIX Connect with Air India Express and the integration of Vistara with Air India is scheduled to be completed next week. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X

Cink leads PGA tour champions, Langer close with 64

PHOENIX, 9 NOV

Stewart Cink maintained his three-shot lead at the PGA Tour Champions' season-ending Charles Schwab Cup Championship with a 5-under 66 in the second round. The 51-year-old, who began the event in 12th place in the season standings, had a 12-under 130 total at Phoenix country club after an opening 64. Cink, who claimed his first senior title at the Ally challenge in August, reflected on his play. Bernhard Langer, the 67-year-old German with a Champions-record 46 wins, surged into second place after a 64, matching or bettering his age for the 21st time on tour. He birdied five of the first seven holes and closed with birdies on 17 and 18. —*PTI*

WI announce squads for T20 clash against England

ST JOHN'S, 9 NOV

Cricket West Indies (CWI) has announced a 15-man squad for the first two matches of the T20I series against England at the Kensington Oval, Barbados. The West Indies, unbeaten in four home T20I series since 2023, have climbed the ICC Men's T20I rankings, emphasizing their strong comeback on the international stage. Head Coach Daren Sammy expressed confidence in the squad's potential. "This is our most settled team with experienced players. The challenge will be selecting the playing eleven as everyone is competing for a spot. I believe this squad can continue playing a winning brand of cricket against a quality England side," Sammy stated in a CWI release. Key players Akeal Hosein, Shimron Hetmyer, Nicholas Pooran, and Andre Russell return to the squad after missing the Sri Lanka tour for personal reasons, adding vital experience and depth in the squad. —*ANI*

FEI Jumping World: ARC athletes shine, win 3 gold medals

BENGALURU, 9 NOV

FEI Jumping World Challenge (South Zone) at Surge Stable, Bangalore, showcased India's top equestrian talent. In Category A (130cm), Yashaan claimed 1st place on Lord Stakkole Nsky-Z, followed by Kiran and Jaiveer. In Category B (120cm), Jai Singh took 1st and 3rd positions, with Harshiyt in 2nd. Jahnvi won Category C (110cm) riding Lambiek. The event provided riders with valuable international experience and networking opportunities. —*ANI*

PHOTO: TWITTER

Kshitij Naveed dominates in Poona Club Open

PUNE, 9 NOV

Kshitij Naveed Kaul from Delhi, the joint leader overnight, shot a steady four-under 67 in the third round to take a two-shot lead with a total score of 16-under 197 at The Poona Club Open, held at the Poona Club Golf Course in Pune. Varun Parikh from Ahmedabad, who won on the PGTI last month, tied the course record with an impressive eight-under 63, moving up to second place at 14-under 199. PGTI Ranking leader Veer Ahlawat from Gurugram carded a flawless 66, bringing him to tied third at 13-under 200. Chandigarh's Karandeep Kochhar, who shared the lead overnight, managed a 70, placing him tied with Ahlawat in third. —*ANI*

Advani wins record 28th billiards title

7th in a row, Advani defeats England's Robert

NEW DELHI, 9 NOV

Ace Indian cueist Pankaj Advani clinched a historic 28th world title, seventh in a row, defeating England's Robert Hall 4-2 at the IBSF World Billiards Championship in Doha on Saturday.

Advani's winning streak had begun in 2016 and has also survived two years (2020, 2021) of vacuum created by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Hall took an early lead in the opening frame, but the Indian rallied to reach the magic 150 first. He then delivered an astonishing unfinished 147 break in the second frame, leaving Hall stunned. The third frame was a masterclass in tactical brilliance from both finalists.

Advani emerged victorious in the cerebral duel, positioning himself just one frame away from making history.

However, Hall refused to bow out quietly, crafting a flawless 151 break in the fourth frame to keep his hopes alive.

The fifth frame saw Hall on fire once more, delivering another stunning 154 break to level the pressure on Advani.

Ace Indian cueist Pankaj Advani PHOTO: PTI

But the Bengaluru man elevated his game in the sixth frame with a crucial century break. After a series of strategic safety exchanges, Indian maestro crossed finish line. —*PTI*

2ND T20I MATCH

India need top-order stability to tackle SA

GQEBERHA, 9 NOV

Sanju Samson will look to continue his domination of the bowlers but India need more stability in the top order when they clash with South Africa in the second T20I South Africa, aiming to extend their superior run in the shortest format, here Sunday.

Samson's stunning 107 off 50 balls powered India to a commanding 61-run victory in the series opener, but the lack of runs from other key batters remains a concern for the visitors.

India need address this issue to ensure that the burden doesn't fall too heavily on their in-form keeper-batter.

The continued failure of opener Abhishek Sharma, who has squandered multiple opportunities, would be worrying the team management.

Skipper Suryakumar Yadav also got a start but fell cheaply, while all-rounder Hardik Pandya was unable to live up to his potential in the opening match.

India need address this issue to ensure that the burden doesn't fall too heavily on their in-form keeper-batter PHOTO: PTI

India's middle-order, which looked solid on paper, struggled to build partnerships as they lost six wickets for just 36 runs, slipping from a commanding 166/2 to 202/8 by the end of their 20 overs.

This collapse highlighted the fragility of India's middle and lower order, something that they will aim to address before the second T20I.

In the bowling department, India were clinical as they restricted South Africa to just 141 in 17.5 overs in the opening match. —*PTI*

Czech legend Zelezny comes on board as Neeraj's coach

NEW DELHI, 9 NOV

Star Indian javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra on Saturday roped in Jan Zelezny, one of the greatest the sport has produced, as coach to help prepare him for the upcoming season.

Zelezny, 58, is widely considered the greatest javelin thrower of the modern era and is a world and Olympic champion. He also holds the record in the event.

Neeraj, after becoming the first Indian athlete to win a gold at the Tokyo Olympics, finished second best at the 2024 Paris Games.

"Double Olympic medallist Neeraj Chopra, on Saturday, announced the start of an exciting new chapter in his career, partnering with javelin legend Jan Zelezny, who comes on board as his new coach. Zelezny, a three-time Olympic and world champion and the current world record holder, has long been an idol to Chopra," said a statement.

Neeraj, who has not crossed the 90m mark in competition so far, would be eager to break the 'barrier' and Zelezny's experience could come in handy.

"Under Zelezný's guidance, Neeraj is eager to deepen his technical mastery and build on the successes that have defined his career. The collaboration also symbolises a fusion of generations, with the young champion drawing inspiration and expertise from what many consider the greatest javelin thrower of all time,"said the statement.

Zelezný's expressed his happiness, saying he was always looking forward to train the Indian star as he still has a lot of potential. —*PTI*

Neeraj Chopra and coach Jan Zelezny

UNOFFICIAL TEST

Jurel shines again but India A lose by 6 wickets against Aus A

MELBOURNE, 9 NOV

Wicketkeeper-batter Dhruv Jurel built a strong case for a possible Test eleven inclusion with his second successive fifty but it was not enough to prevent India A going down to Australia A by six wickets on the third day of the second and final unofficial Test on Saturday.

With this deafeat, India A lost the two-match series 0-2, as the visitors had earlier lost the first unofficial Test by seven wickets at Mackay.

Resuming from overnight 73 for 5, Jurel, who made a valiant 80 in the first innings, once again stood tall amid the ruins with a patient 68 off 122 balls during which he hit five boundaries.

Jurel shared vital 94 runs with Nitish Kumar Reddy (38) before being dismissed. Prasidh Krishna (29) and Tanush Kotian (44) also played good hands to take India to 229 in their second innings, setting a paltry target of 168.

Wicketkeeper-batter Dhruv Jurel PHOTO: PTI

Off-spinner Corey Rocchiccioli (4/74) turned out to be the star performer for Australia A in India's second innings, complemented well by all-rounder Beau Webster (3/49) and right-arm fast bowler Nathan McAndrew (2/53).

Prasidh took six wickets in the match, boosting his chances to get a call to India's playing eleven during upcoming Border-Gavaskar Trophy as support seamer behind Bumrah and Siraj. —*PTI*

ISL: Odisha FC's attack vs Mohun Bagan's defense

BHUBANESWAR, 9 NOV

Odisha FC will take on Mohun Bagan in a clash between two contrasting styles of play in the Indian Super League (ISL) here on Sunday.

Although the hosts have managed only a triumph against the visitors in their previous 11 meetings, the former will be desperate to utilise their home advantage to the fullest this term.

Notably, the Juggernauts are unbeaten versus the Mariners at home in their last three engagements, winning once and drawing twice.

At the same time, Bagan boasts of a tight defence, as the side is coming off three straight clean sheets, besides having netted multiple goals in all those meetings and winning each of them.

Currently, Mohun Bagan is placed second in the points table with 13 points from six matches, whereas Odisha is ninth with eight points in seven games. —*PTI*

Odisha FC to play against Mohun Bagan today PHOTO: PTI

Ranji Trophy: Bengal vs K'taka match ends in tie

The match ended in a draw. Bengal got 3 points in the match because of the Innings lead and Karnataka had to settle for 1 point PHOTO: X

BENGALURU, 9 NOV

Bengal earned three points from the draw against Karnataka by virtue of their first innings lead and moved up to fourth position on the table with eight points.

Once Bengal made 283 for five declared in their second innings to build an overall lead of 363 runs, the fate of the match was sealed.

Sudip Kumar Gharami made an unbeaten 101 (193b, 12x4, 2x6) and added 123 runs for the sixth wicket with Wriddhiman Saha (63 not out, 70b, 7x4, 1x6).

The home side made 110 for three before both the skippers agreed for a draw.

Karnataka are placed fourth on the table with 9 points and they will face UP in their next fixture.

Bengal will travel to Indore to take on Madhya Pradesh, who defeated Bihar by an innings and 108 runs to earn seven points to move up to third place on the ladder.

Though both have similar points, MP are in third place because of their better net run rate – +1.15 against Karnataka's +0.99.

In Bengaluru: Bengal 301 and 283/5 declared in 81.4 overs (Sudip Kumar Gharami 101 not out, Wriddhiman Saha 63 not out; Vidyadhar Patil 3/53) drew with Karnataka 221 and 110/3 in 28 overs (R Smaran 35 not out, Manish Pandey 30 not out; Suraj Sindhu Jaiswal 3/27). —PTI

Klaasen hits 100 T20I sixes, 4th player in 2024

During the first T20I of the four-match series between India and South Africa on Friday, wicket-keeper-batter Heinrich Klaasen became the fourth player to smash 100 sixes in a calendar year in T20s. Sanju Samson's fireworks and Varun Chakaravarthy's spin left South Africa in crumbles and India elated with a 61-run victory in the opening T20I at Kingsmead on Friday. Klaasen scored 25 runs off 22 balls which was laced with two boundaries and one maximum in his innings. With this one-six, the 33-year-old achieved this landmark. —*PTI*

SAMSON'S COMEBACK

'Doubted myself, 'SKY' & coach supported me'

DURBAN, 9 NOV

India batter Sanju Samson reflected on his early struggles in international cricket, saying that a string of failures made him doubt his ability, but self-belief and support of the captain and coach helped him stage a strong comeback.

Samson hit back-to-back centuries in T20 Internationals with a breathtaking 50-ball-107 to headline India's comfortable 61-run win over South Africa in the opening game here on Friday.

"I have faced a lot of failures in my career. I think when you go through that failure, you have lot of doubts in your mind. People definitely say that social media definitely plays a role," Samson told reporters in the post-match press conference.

"But you also think a lot about yourself. Sanju, are you not made for international level? I think you are doing well in IPL. Why are you not doing well internationally? So I have a lot of such thoughts. But after so many years of experience, I know what my ability is.

"If I spend some time in the wicket, then I have a shot-making ability in spin and pace and I know that I can definitely contribute well to the team. I can win the match. This is also a reality. There are definitely a lot of downs happening but the upside is also really good. So I kept telling myself that."

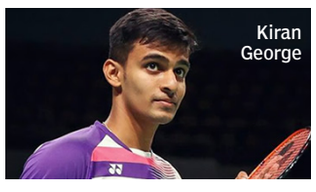
Samson, who turns 30 on Monday, has often been criticised for not fulfilling his potential despite abundant talent. He had scored successive ducks in Sri Lanka but responded with a 111 against Bangladesh in the third T20I and followed it up with another ton on Friday.

The Kerala batter acknowledged the crucial support he received from captain Suryakumar Yadav and coach Gautam Gambhir during his low phase.

"When you have a supporting captain like Suryakumar Yadav and Gautam bhai and VVS Laxman sir, they all support you during failures. The way they communicate with you in your failures is very important. Everyone knows that if we are going through a negative phase, then the player can get lost there," he said. —*PTI*

Shuttler Kiran's Korea Masters run ends in SFs

IKSAN CITY, 9 NOV



Kiran George

Indian shuttler Kiran George's impressive run at the Korea Masters came to an end with a semifinal loss to Thailand's Kunlavut Vitidsarn in the men's singles competition here on Saturday.

The 24-year-old, ranked 41st in the world, went down 12-21 20-22 to the top-seeded and world number five Vitidsarn in the BWF World Tour Super 300 event.

George, who trains at the Prakash Padukone Badminton Academy (PPBA), had earlier registered a fine win over fifth seed Takuma Obayashi of Japan in the quarterfinals.

The semifinal loss brought an end to India's campaign in the tournament. George kept it tight in the opening game, staying level at 5-5 before Kunlavut pulled ahead to 11-6 at the break.

The Thai shuttler extended his lead further, moving to 17-8 after the interval, and quickly sealed the first game.

In the second game, Kunlavut surged to a 13-4 lead, but Kiran mounted a sensational fightback, levelling the score at 20-20. However, it was Kunlavut who held his nerves to win the final two points. —*PTI*